





"Hospitals are not required to publish annual reports of the proportion of their admissions who, after stated periods as inmates, die. Common sense tells us that such statistics would be a very crude measure of the skill and devotion of hospital staff."

"There seems to be less understanding that a school's detailed examination statistics are also a very crude measure of its performance..." Initial comments from the Secondary Heads Association on the proposals of the Secretary of State on information for parents.

The Secondary Heads Association, concentrate most of their hostility (page 3) on the section on examination results. They clearly share the local authorities' dislike of the whole idea of making the publication of any standardized information a legal requirement at the present time. But they come out most strongly on the question of exam statistics and the threat of local league tables: hence their analogy with the hospital mortalities.

It is not a wholly happy comparison — though many teachers might think it would be rather a good idea if hospitals had to come a good deal clearer with the public than they now do. It would certainly concentrate the medical mind. If the death rate differed markedly from one general hospital to the next, would it be such a bad thing if someone was moved to ask a few questions?

In the matter of examination results and the publication of other information about schools on a regular basis, it is important first to consider why this has come up. What has brought all this to the surface is the legal right of parents to express their preference when there is a choice of schools for their children. The right to express a preference logically entails a right to the information on which such a preference might rationally be based.



## You cannot treat exams as important and then try to suppress results

There are educational administrators and politicians who argue persuasively that this right is prejudicial to good educational administration or good social engineering. There are those who think that ring fences are needed to achieve even standards; that tightly-drawn catchment areas and close-knit neighbourhood schools are prerequisites for an effective policy of positive discrimination; that parental preference is incompatible with equality of opportunity. But that is not what the 1980 Education Act said. It is not what the 1944 Education Act said. It is not even what SHA would now say.

Where parents can express a preference they are bound to take a view as to the comparative merits of different schools for their own particular child. Everybody acknowledges that it is very difficult to assemble the information on which a balanced judgment can be made — information about the child or information about the school. But this is no argument for deliberately suppressing relevant information in the pretence that parents will make better judgments if

they are only supplied with special pleading. Teachers and educational administrators would, themselves, certainly want to have as much information as possible on which to base their own preference. They can hardly advocate deliberately keeping parents more in the dark than they are likely to be themselves.

So — what about the claim that raw statistics for examination results would be so misleading as to be dangerous? This is not an easy case to defend if it means trying to suppress information which is obviously necessary to a parent trying to make up his or her mind about an aspect of a school's performance which most heads are ready to stress when it suits them.

True, a parent needs to balance crude exam statistics with a lot more information. But in the end, the object of the exercise is to arrive at a basis for choice. To know all may be to forgive all, but if it is argued, for example, that School A's apparently poor exam statistics are explained by adverse social factors, this is unlikely to make a parent more eager to choose that school. On the contrary, it

might positively reinforce the claims of School B whose exam success is attributable mainly to a benign social environment. This is hardly an argument for suppressing the information on which such a choice might be made. Why should parents have to rely on intelligent guesswork when the facts are available?

Similarly, to suppress detailed examination results while publishing figures showing the proportion of pupils staying on to the sixth form for "A" levels, might be just as prejudicial to "good" schools with small sixths.

The heads are clearly apprehensive that local league tables will make their jobs more difficult. If league tables become part of the social landscape it is very probable that they will. It is in the nature of "consumerism" — in education, as in respect of other professional services — that it makes life harder for the practitioner. Which takes the argument back to the merits of parental choice versus closed catchment areas.

In the ultimate analysis this is an argument about freedom of information where, for once, the politicians are in favour of openness. There is obviously some danger in league tables; there is even more danger in keeping unnecessary secrets and creating artificial news and falsely exciting revelations in the local press. The fact is that examination performance varies widely; also that though it is by no means true that the school with the "best" examination results is the "best" school, any parent is going to want to see evidence that a school is competent and experienced in the teaching which is required for academic success. In this respect the detailed statistics will be much less important than the indisputable fact that some schools have big and flourishing sixth forms while others languish. Nothing can prevent people from drawing conclusions from this.

## Comment

### Exams: more resolute indecision

The Government's rapid about-turn (page 6) allowing school examination boards a part in the now 17 plus pre-vocational examination is remarkable nearly for its speed. True, Examinations 16 to 18 in which the GCSE and CSE boards were denied a role in this campaign was prefaced by a discussion document and therefore some changes were to be expected. But to make one so hastily, before even having had a chance to receive comments from those being consulted, is tantamount to the admission of a serious error.

It was unwise to discount the experience and interest of school examination boards in this end of the market. It suggests that whereas the style of the previous Government on the 17 plus was to muddle along, making no decisions, the present Government is given to deciding first and muddling later. But more important is whether at the end of the day we are further forward. The chief purposefulness of the discussion papers, language is now seen to have a certain hollowiness, but it remains the closest thing to progress on this issue over to emerge from the Department of Education and Science so far.

A bigger upset may have been caused by the green light given to K&O, to switch from the Southern group for the now common 16 plus examination and the Associated Examining Board to the London group with its university board. This seems to have reopened a can of worms most had hoped was sealed for good. No doubt it will delight those like the Oxford and Cambridge boards who always wanted three groups instead of four, with bigger shares of the market. This is not so much an about turn as step backwards by several months. Serious work on new national syllabuses and criteria should have been started by now. All this spells further delay for the 16 plus — a development which will only make real progress if Mr Carleton shows that he cares about it enough to give it urgency and convincing leadership. Unfortunately, he and his colleagues are so muddled in their thinking about secondary school examinations that neither is likely to be forthcoming.

### Luck of the Christmas draw

The fact that 70 per cent of parents in a recent survey were willing to provide funds for basic exercise and text books (page 5) should surprise no-one. Few parents with children in schools today are prepared to march on County Hall or Westminster with demands for a better tomorrow. Instead, most will pitch their pennies into the Christmas raffle.

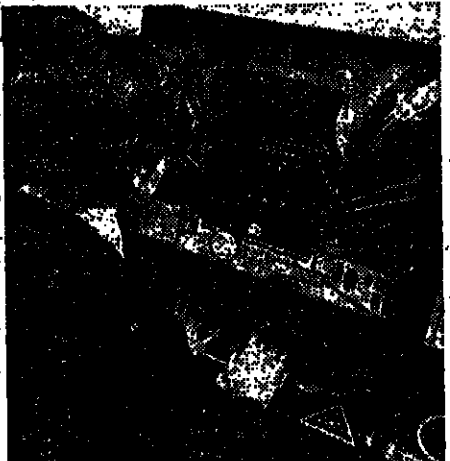
Once the fundraising wagon gets rolling, it develops its own momentum, and even has some good side effects. Parents get more involved in the school, and their relations with staff become warmer. Heads who dislike the whole business can console themselves with these benefits.

The trouble is, of course, that the results may be deeply inequitable. Parental efforts are now providing not only textbooks but bricks and mortar — conversions and decorations — essential furniture and equipment, and even part-time staff. There are no prizes for guessing whose children benefit most.

Things are at the stage where any government seriously committed to protecting standards in public education should take notice. Of course, there are wasted resources in some schools. Of course — as the HMT report on Inner London showed — a lot depends on teachers' skills and attitudes. But in many schools, particularly in county authorities, skilled and committed teachers are simply not being provided with the basic tools of the trade.

A radical Tory government might consider looking at other European countries where, in general, parents pay for text and exercise books — and proper state assistance is provided for poorer families. It is just possible that such a scheme could result in better, better-cared-for, and more equitable provision in this country. It is equally possible that the cost of administering the necessary exemptions and "free books" would outweigh the advantages (as with museum charges, and — according to the Morrison committee — prescription charges).

Certainly any such scheme would need detailed prior investigation, with careful cost-benefit analysis (the sort of thing British governments and administrators are conspicuously bad at). And certainly it would be political dynamite. But some radical action is needed — if only just spending money in some areas — if the principle of free public education for everyone is not to disappear covetly, by attrition.



### Anyone for tennis?

Smartest idea a trick or two when they floated the idea of installing electronic games like Space Invaders in schools. They saw it as a way of pulling in custom for school dinners and raising cash. They neglected the educational possibilities.

Dr K. W. Hillier of ICR has now pointed some of these out (page 6). Space Invaders, it turns out, can be an invaluable diagnostic tool when deciding which employees will respond to training in new technology. The old question remains to be answered. How far is the game simply tapping some innate skill?

There is some support for the innate view. Intelligence testers, reacting to successive attacks from multi-cultural fronts, have recently been working on new tests which depend on people's differing reaction speeds to non-verbal stimuli, such as flashing lights. It is too early to say whether the right environment, from birth, can improve performance on these tests. A child even Simon at the age of four, and graduating through Electronic Batsmanship to UFO Masterblaster may well have an inviolable head start.

More research is needed. There are evident dangers: it may well be that the skills of the generation that started with Lotso, and moved on through Monopoly to Polygons will be needed. Can the solitary intellectual effort of Chess Challenger provide the psychological reserves needed by Spaskey when confronting Bobby Fischer?

Meanwhile, one thing is certain. The moment Space Invaders appears — for whatever reason — in a significant number of schools, the pubs will go back to bar billiards and darts.

### Making progress on Warnock

Writing in the TES last week, Mary Warnock gave a glimpse of what it must be like when a report takes over your name, but you still can't help taking the headlines personally.

Even leaving aside such personal feelings, she took issue with the more negative reactions to the White Paper on special education, and what appeared to be a common universal belief that nothing at all could be done without more money. Her view that action is in fact being taken in many parts of the country to plan policy in terms of special need rather than categories is borne out by the account on page 15 this week of the progress being made in Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire started making their plans to rethink special education along Warnock lines well before the White Paper was even published, and what they are doing is a useful reminder to anyone who thinks that real integration can be a tedious, one emotional leap, but also a tedious demonstration that it is possible to do a course without spending very much more.

Oxfordshire has come in for a lot of praise for trying to save money on education. Now the county deserves credit on this issue. It is ironic that it is now coming under legal attack for lack of special education provision, for 16 to 19 year olds in the Henley area (page 3). It is doubly ironic, since FE provision for handicapped young people is hard to find in most parts of the country, and some already exists in Oxfordshire, and some already exists in Oxfordshire.

It was reported in the TES on October 16 that DES lawyers were "doubtful" about Warnock's interpretation of 16-19. When special education for the legally blind is now becoming clearer, it is that, legally, it is in FE, for anyone between 16 and 19 years of age, a parent's request it. Taken literally, it could run up an alarming bill.

### No comment

The Child Abuse booklet, setting out procedures to be followed by Head Teachers, School Doctors and Nurses, Education Welfare Officers, etc., was recently being printed. From the evidence of the "horch-potch" of Oxfordshire County Council, circulars to schools and other educational establishments

## NEWS

### Teachers lag behind in pay rises

by Richard Garner

Teachers have not received a pay "bonus" despite an average rise of 35 per cent over the past 18 months, according to an independent pay research report published today.

The study, published by Incomes Data Services, is seen as useful ammunition by teachers' unions to counter the impression — given in the wake of Professor Clegg's admission of a 4 per cent error in his report — that teachers are over-paid.

It concludes: "Despite the large increases won by teachers in England and Wales since April 1979, teachers are surprisingly lower in the pay league than they were in 1975 before the last round of incomes policy began; though they are relatively better off than in 1970."

"Like many other public service groups, they have not kept up with the Joneses since 1975 and efforts to catch up were slowed down, first

by staged increases and then by cash limits."

The report shows that new entrants and deputy head teachers received the biggest increases between 1970 and 1980 — with the starting salary for non-graduates rising by 342 per cent and that of deputy heads of the largest comprehensive by 318 per cent. The scale two teacher on maximum had the smallest increase of 252 per cent. The retail price index increased by 273 per cent.

The report adds that teachers still would not have caught up with their 1975 position if Clegg's recommendations had been implemented promptly in April 1979, instead of being introduced in two stages this year.

Despite equal pay in the profession, the report shows that women teachers earn on average only 85 per cent of the men's average. A larger number of women work in primary schools and have the less well in the promotion stakes.

### MP takes up case over benefits

The plight of unemployed school leavers who cannot claim supplementary benefit has been taken up by an MP.

Mr Richard Wainwright, Liberal MP for Colne Valley, is raising the issue in a Commons adjournment debate. Under the new Social Security Act, youngsters who leave school immediately after taking their examinations — usually in June or July — cannot claim benefit until September.

The 2,000-strong Institute of Careers Officers is writing to Mr Wainwright outlining its objections to changes in the Act — which came into force last month. Previously, the leavers could claim immediately after their exams.

Mr Ray Hurst, the Institute's secretary, said: "There is very grave concern within the careers service of the full implications of this change. It is putting young people in a very difficult position. It could mean the difference of £150 coming into a family as a result of a young person sitting examinations."

"Our view is that the Department of Health and Social Security did not undertake the wide consultation of all the appropriately interested bodies that it claims it did."

The DHSS has insisted there was consultation over the move which was designed to stop children claiming supplementary benefit during the summer holidays and then returning to school.

### DES inspects the inspectors

Britain's 500 HM Inspectors will be expected themselves next term. They are to come under the scrutiny of the Government's cost-cutter, Sir Mark Rayner, recruited from the Ministry of Defence.

The three-month exercise will begin early in the New Year and will examine the role, organization, effectiveness and how successfully they collaborate with the DES and the Welsh Office. Particular attention will be paid to the role of local education authorities.

The operation will be conducted by Mr Nicholas Stuart, under-secretary, DES, under the supervision of Lady Young, junior minister for schools. A similar exercise will be undertaken on the Inspectorate in Scotland.

### Child labour laws flouted

Continued from page 1

Young Persons Act 1933 — still the basic legislation for the control of child labour — is being flouted in a number of ways, lifting heavy objects and working for more than two hours on any Sunday. The Inner London Education Authority, which has used its powers more than most authorities to fill in gaps in the law, has found some other things, and on a fairground.

The report says the high number of employers acting illegally is due to ignorance and not to any "horch-potch" of law. It says its first and main recommendation is that the Employ-

### Heads condemn exam league tables

The two leading headteacher unions joined this week in condemning the Government's proposal that local authorities should publish league tables of exam results for their schools.

The 21,000 strong National Association of Head Teachers, which represents two out of three state school heads, accused Mr Mark Carleton, the Education Secretary, of pushing schools towards "a kind of misleading cup-tie competition" over exam results.

Much of the information the

Government wants councils to provide parents with is "either irrelevant or needlessly complex", the headteachers say. And they find the estimated cost of collecting and publishing it "indefensible" at a time of cuts.

The Secondary Heads Association, whose 3,000 members make up the majority of secondary school heads, says in its response to the Government's proposals that it is "entirely inappropriate" for local authorities to handle the publication of exam results. Detailed information should

be the responsibility of the schools themselves it says.

Publication of results is the most controversial aspect of the Government's consultative document on information for parents, a legal obligation on local authorities within the 1980 Education Act. The Government is already under heavy pressure from local authorities to "water down" or delay its proposals, due to come into force next year. They say they cannot afford to implement them when their budgets are being slashed.

### Councils could be breaking the law on 16-19 provision

Councils are breaking the law if they do not provide further education for all 16 to 19-year-olds who want it — including the handicapped. That is the view of the Department of Education and Science that emerged this week on local authorities' obligations within the 1944 Education Act.

Speculation on this point has been brought to a head by parents in Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, where a school that taught the mentally handicapped up to the age of 19 was merged with one that will take them only up to the age of 16.

Appealing, the parents, cited the 1944 Act and the 1970 Education (Handicapped Children) Act.

The DES has now told Oxford-

shire they should be making some provision. The department's interpretation is that every authority is required to make adequate further education available for all who want it between the ages of 16 and 19. It is even suggested that this should be provided in the college of the students' choice.

Mr Tim Brighouse, Oxfordshire's chief education officer, said: "The implications of this are much wider than Oxfordshire. The implications for the further education of 16 to 19-year-olds, both handicapped and otherwise, are immense."

Oxfordshire's intentions towards the handicapped were "honourable and enlightened". Only shortage of money was preventing them from opening further education units for the handicapped in Henley and Banbury. One such unit operates in Oxford.

### PGCE graduates 'do better' than those with BED

Graduates qualifying as teachers by taking the one-year postgraduate Certificate in Education at university continue to be more successful at finding jobs than those qualifying through a BED degree.

The exceptions are those qualifying for primary or middle schools. They do no better than BED graduates. This may only mean that jobs are scarcer in these areas but could tend to confirm the suspicion with which some schools regard the PGCE as an adequate preparation for teaching young children.

Latest figures from the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers show 86 per cent of this

summer's PGCE leavers are already teaching. Though figures for this year's BED leavers are not yet available, Mr John Barnett, former principal of Ripon College, York, who is collecting them for institutes of higher education, said this week he expected figures would be similar to last year's when about 75 per cent of BED graduates obtained jobs by Christmas.

Of 4,722 PGCE students who left the 31 university departments of education in July, 269 were unemployed and still looking for a teaching post by mid-October while another 58 had other jobs but were still hoping to teach.

The Low Pay Unit, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG, price 90p plus 15p post and packing.

• Pupils with Saturday jobs do not need school work experience courses, the Schools Council "think tank" says. The world of work suggested this week.

The World of Work Liaison Group, on which there are both teachers and industrialists, warn in their report that industry is being saturated with work experience schemes as important opportunities for young people to gain an insight into adult responsibilities and relationships.

### NUT 'disappointed'

The National Union of Teachers said this week it was "disappointed" with the attitude of other teachers' organizations which had been requested to help in blacking the post of Mrs Eileen Crossbie, the Nottinghamshire nursery teacher refusing to teach a class she considered oversized. Despite the blacking, the county council said it had received several applications for the post although it was still possible it would be re-advertised.

### Support grant to be trimmed

Next Tuesday the rate support grant settlements for England and Wales will be announced.

There will be an overall drop of 1 per cent — from 61 to 60 per cent — in the amount of local spending which the Government supports through the grant. For England alone, the drop will be from 60 to 59 per cent.

If local authorities spread their cuts evenly among services, this means that the education service will lose £67m in central Government funds. Local authorities will have to compensate for the loss through rate increases, higher charges or cuts in services.

The cut in the Government's share of local authority spending comes on top of the overall reduction in local government spending of 3 per cent, the £13.5 billion originally planned for 1981-1982.

Today, representatives of the Council of Local Education Authorities will meet Mr Mark Carleton, the Education Secretary, to discuss how the new cuts should be shared out. Mr Carleton will then make a statement in the Commons, next Tuesday setting out the Government's priorities but not giving a detailed breakdown of the cuts.

### Watch your step!

Pupils will have to be on their toes to pass the new O level in dance offered by the University of London GCE board.

The syllabus of the Mode 2 exam was devised by the Inner London Dance Teachers' Association and is said to be equally suitable for classical or contemporary dancers.



Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

## HEALTH AND HYGIENE AT HOME AND SCHOOL

If you are involved with young people at any stage of their development you will be aware of the importance of your responsibility for their care. Courses of instruction in a wide range of areas, including Parentcraft and School Health (which may be taken whole- or part-time) have been designed and are run by The Royal Institute of Public Health & Hygiene.

A handbook for 1980/81 detailing syllabi together with explanatory information and full membership listing is now available. Copies of the 480-page handbook may be obtained for £9.95 (incl. p & p) from the publishers:

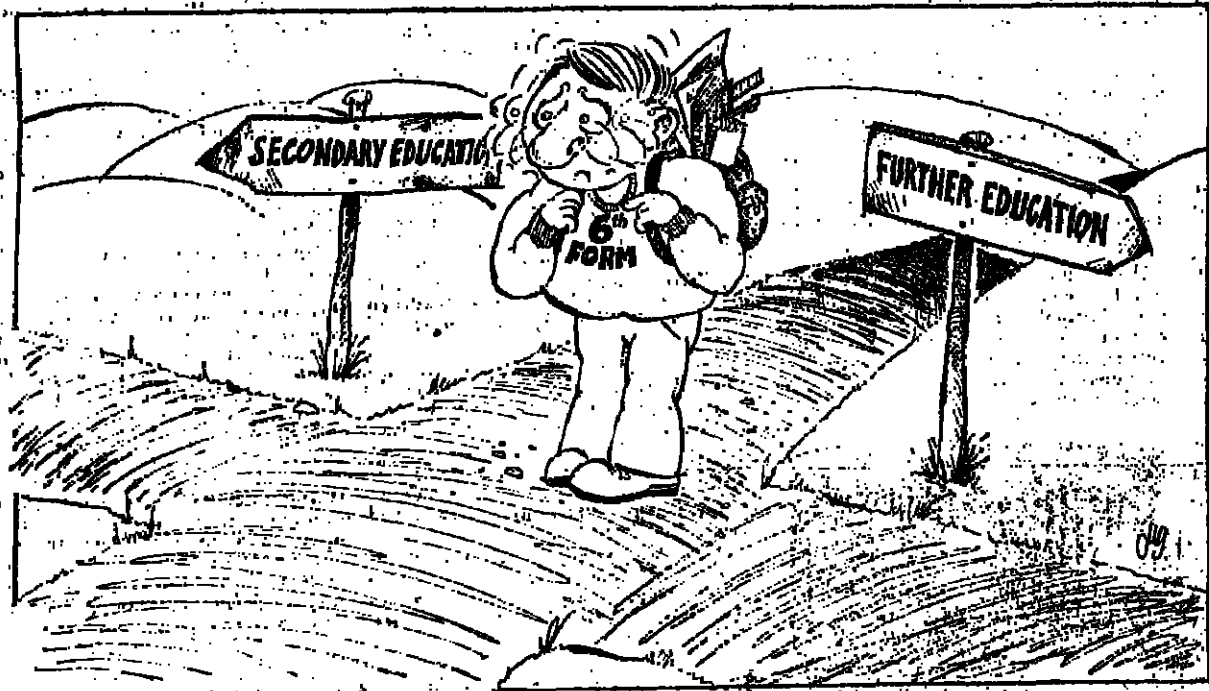
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# Platform

David Henschel argues that tertiary education has to be clearly distinguished from FE and secondary

## The tertiary way ahead



The word "tertiary" has no official standing. It has been misleadingly assumed for the description of those few further education colleges into which some local authorities have concentrated post-16 courses (essentially for economic reasons). The term should be reconsidered, properly applied and practically realized.

Initiative in the battle for tertiary has so far been divided between further education and the various moves for sixth form, post-16 or cooperative provision, but further education has been increasingly aggressive expansionist, sales campaign which is now overtaking the other.

Radical developments in senior secondary education are ignored or dismissed as minor, dressed as lamb: anything sixth form is old-fashioned, restrictive, narrowly academic, irrelevant to workaday realities, often uneconomical. Youngsters are claimed and encouraged to vote with their feet for the "adult" further education combination of freedom and vocational preparation; parents are attracted with prospects of wider choice or specifically packaged processing for careers in management, engineering, or technology; expansion into the CEB further education, the student market. A level topped with novelties such as law or social economics.

But secondary developments have also blurred the traditional distinction of the sector. Curriculum is widened to cater for the "new sixth" with job, CEB and vocational courses, work experience, local enterprise, and other courses with further education. Various forms of progression and the reorganisation of the 16 to 19-year-old personal and social education, "new" and "old" are being combined, sixth forms, sixth forms, combining with further education colleges, and most distinctively, two-year, three-year, four-year, and five-year courses. The need for this reorganisation of the school sector is clear. The balance of the secondary sector is divided over sixth form policy and even the Association of Sixth Form Colleges, which values its scholastic and traditions, has been slow to recognize that their influence could be swept away by the new provision to be thought of as serving a distinctive tertiary stage of education.

This is no time to play King

Canute. There are strong social and economic forces and needs which the development of a tertiary system for 16 to 19-year-olds will seem to harness and satisfy. The tide is coming in—the task is to channel it constructively. Never mind the semantics for the time being. Sixth form colleges are tertiary associations. There are no boundaries, incoherent and uncoordinated as usual in this country, a de facto development of a tertiary system. While local government controls education it is as unlikely as unnecessary for the system to be institutionally uniform.

But there is practical wisdom in considering the 16 to 19-year-old age group and providing for it distinctively, for it is the period of initiation into adulthood. One may generalize about its tensions, confusions, problems, but at no time of life can a regulated uniformity of treatment or provision be less appropriate. Traditional secondary defenders believe most who want (or whose parents want) more full-time education get it and mature best as seniors in familiar community. Traditional further education claims that late adolescents are best educated and matured by being given adult freedoms and mixed with adult students, and that this and the added mix of full-time part-time students is ideal preparation for actual adulthood.

Each claim may be right for some. It is to be strongly disputed that either is ideal for all, or perhaps most, for to effect both attitudes amount to a denial of at least some of the real needs of late adolescents, and of the provision of a bridge into adulthood. When these young people leave their fifth forms they are only 16, many are very immature and immature, whatever the approach, is unconfident. They are not yet ready to accept responsibility for their own lives, and are in need of guidance, protection and guidance, and of a steady, developing pressure for the emphasis to move from the former to the latter. The balance of the secondary sector is divided over sixth form policy and even the Association of Sixth Form Colleges, which values its scholastic and traditions, has been slow to recognize that their influence could be swept away by the new provision to be thought of as serving a distinctive tertiary stage of education.

But the investigation reassuringly releases clearly taught and maintained values, high personal expectations, vigorous varied extra-curricular commitment, and the generation of a strong sense of community, to the general education.

national success of a good school. But in a sixth form college these are not aspects of a hidden curriculum, but to be published as official, important and high level of academic expectation and achievement. This emphasis on general education within a community is perhaps the best inheritance of the scholastic tradition and further education proponents should respect it. Indeed the way further education tertiary colleges have developed shows some appreciation of this. Further education's expansion has been strengthened by some movement away from narrow packaged courses and towards a more general education. But there are obvious factors which militate against a community atmosphere—size, part-timers (students and staff), the lack of a social focus, and of any specific moral or religious element; the lack of facilities and traditions for sports and extra-curricular activities; the specialist course-based for principals and lecturers are not in loco parentis. Further education is a tertiary education, and it is not to be confused with the late adolescents are best educated and matured by being given adult freedoms and mixed with adult students, and that this and the added mix of full-time part-time students is ideal preparation for actual adulthood.

Each claim may be right for some. It is to be strongly disputed that either is ideal for all, or perhaps most, for to effect both attitudes amount to a denial of at least some of the real needs of late adolescents, and of the provision of a bridge into adulthood. When these young people leave their fifth forms they are only 16, many are very immature and immature, whatever the approach, is unconfident. They are not yet ready to accept responsibility for their own lives, and are in need of guidance, protection and guidance, and of a steady, developing pressure for the emphasis to move from the former to the latter. The balance of the secondary sector is divided over sixth form policy and even the Association of Sixth Form Colleges, which values its scholastic and traditions, has been slow to recognize that their influence could be swept away by the new provision to be thought of as serving a distinctive tertiary stage of education.

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## NEWS

### Why records must be put straight before truancy figures are known

by Sandra Hempel

It would be impossible to get meaningful figures on truancy until the education service got record-keeping right, Mr Don Vennell, assistant education officer of the Inner London Education Authority, told a meeting last week.

"All our reports are about non-attendance which is not the same as truancy," he told members of the Justice for Children pressure group. "Some is just non-recorded attendance because the kids have moved and no-one has got the records right."

The authority had a legal obligation to force attendance, Mr Vennell said, but a court case was normally the end of a very long line. Sometimes non-attendance was caused by difficulties in the home rather than by positive action to avoid school. In those cases the parents often had the same difficulties in getting to work. ILEA sometimes took a case to court as a way of focusing official attention on great problems within the family of a child, but this was "only one symptom."

Social worker Mr Robin Grunsell set up a centre for truants nine years ago out of sheer frustration, he told the meeting. "I was sick to death of taking truants in the front school gate knowing that they would be out of school before I had time to run round."

His truancy pioneer project in Islington began with 15 "unhappy" truants from two schools. "We were amazed to find we were getting 90 per cent attendance. The children wanted to learn and they would be happy to go to school if they were given the chance," he said.

### Democracy in the classroom call discussed by pupils

by Douglas Hetherington

More than 200 pupils from schools in the London area packed the House of Commons last Thursday to hear a call for more democracy in the classroom.

They were attending a conference on "Preparation for life in a democracy" organized by the House of Commons and the House of Education. The conference was held in the House of Commons and was attended by Mr. Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, and other members of the Government.

Other speakers included the secretary of the Education Association, a pressure group for political education in schools. Mrs. Sharon Marshall, herself a teacher, said there was a fear of indoctrination and that in any case many children were bored by politics as a curriculum subject. She said that the role of the teacher was to help children to develop their own views on political issues.

### Disabled workers' scheme

Employers are invited to apply for the Manpower Services Commission's award for their "Fit to Work" scheme which encourages people to employ disabled workers. Applications should be in before the end of March 1981. The text of the award is available from local district council officers or Employment officers.

a year in the unit two children were sent to school and fell into the old pattern almost immediately. "In two weeks they had confidence in themselves, knew the school, knew the staff, knew the other children, knew the rules of the school. In the end we could provide care, control and sense of identity that the school could not give to its pupils."

Since then the project has been up and running. It has been a considerable success, according to Mr. Grunsell, who said that the school had been able to provide care, control and sense of identity that the school could not give to its pupils.

The law on truancy was not a fair and 'should be changed according to community values', Mr. Grunsell said. Last year he was a member of the House of Education and he was disappointed to find that the law was not changed.

"It would be a bold education psychologist who said that the law was a truancy from the work of the House of Education," he said. "A suit for educational practice would be very interesting."

The conference also heard of the relationship between the House of Education and the House of Commons. Mr. Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, and other members of the Government were present.

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## NEWS

### Authorities press for change in Act over work conditions

#### Dinners row ends talks

by Richard Garner

Talks over a contract on hours and working conditions collapsed on Monday after 18 months of negotiation. The local authorities insisted that teachers should supervise midday meals, refused to discuss limitations on class size and would not give in to teachers' demands for time for marking and lesson preparation in school hours.

Local authority and Department of Education and Science officials will be meeting Mr. Carlisle next week to discuss changes in the remuneration of Teachers' Act. Officials said that the breakdown in talks underlined their point that the Act should be repealed.

However, it will be touch and go whether any changes can be introduced before negotiations on next year's pay claim, due in April, begin in the New Year. One possible solution was a quick amendment which would allow pay and conditions of service to be negotiated together.

If the arbitration clause—which at present makes an award binding on both sides unless set aside by Parliament—were to be left in, it would allow an arbitrator to impose new conditions of service.

Teachers' union leaders, however, warned of industrial action if there were attempts to impose new conditions through pay negotiations. Mr. Nigel de Gruchy, Assistant Secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, which has boycotted the talks on a new contract, said: "That might lead us to the prospect of industrial unrest which would not be in the interests of the children."

Mr. Peter Smith, Assistant Secretary of the Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association, warned of the dangers of the type of guerrilla warfare which many teachers are becoming just a little bit tired of.

All the teachers' unions involved in the discussions agreed that breakdown was inevitable at Monday's meeting. Mr. David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, which has supported local authority attempts to secure better midday meals supervision, said: "With no significant concessions from the employers on class size and non-teaching time in schools, there was no way that the talks were going to get off the ground."

The local authorities had wanted some guarantee of support for the head teacher from school staff to supervise pupils at midday. On class sizes the unions wanted maximum sizes of 23 for infants and 27 for other classes.

On marking and preparation time, the authorities proposed a 30-hour contractual week including five hours "free time" for marking and preparation and up to seven and a half hours for other duties. The teachers wanted 27 hours in school, including five and a half hours for marking and preparation plus five hours for other duties.

Now the working party will simply report to its parent body, the Council of Local Education Authorities' School Teachers' Committee, that after 18 months of discussions no agreement can be reached on a new contract.

There were questions too about where the time or money for these developments in schools would come from. One speaker from Kirk-



The traditional Christmas lunch can go ahead at Wolverley High School, near Kidderminster, Worcestershire... thanks to the school farm. Two pigs have been sent for slaughter. The new cafeteria dining system had ruled out the usual Yule-tide fare.

Conservative councillors in Rochdale, Lancashire, are writing to Mr. Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary, urging him to stop the council thwarting the Government's assisted places scheme. Mr. David Williams, chairman of the Labour-controlled council's education committee, had sent a directive to local heads ordering them not to cooperate with the placing of their pupils in independent schools. He told them they would face a disciplinary hearing if they disobeyed.

The National Association of Head Teachers denounced the threat as illegal and said it would support any head who defied the directive through the courts, if necessary. Under the 1980 Education Act, pupils and head teachers are free to take part in the scheme without the local authority's approval, although they must have permission for transfers to the scheme at sixth form level.

Mr. Williams' action conflicts with a resolution passed at a recent meeting of the Labour-controlled Association of Metropolitan Authorities. This urged local authorities to take part in the scheme "so far as required by law" but not to agree to sixth form transfers.

After five hours of discussion revolving round individual words and phrases in the disputed passages, the committee adjourned until next Tuesday. A fifth floor will then be considered. The report which was due to be published last month so that it could be out next week will now not be published until next year — if at all.

If the committee cannot agree on a version acceptable to Mr. Carlisle's two colleagues, then the Government will be left with the choice of issuing a document with very low credibility, or doing nothing at all.

The Socialist Educational Association wants to abolish the traditional sixth form. A report published this week says a levels and AS exams for the 16 to 19 age group should be ended and that new subjects should be introduced with a work experience component.

A new research body based at the Institute of Economic Affairs is to be launched on Monday. The Social Affairs Unit shares some of its directorate and its advisory council with those on the right-wing think tank, the Centre for Policy Studies.

The SAU director is Dr. Digby Anderson and Mrs. Caroline Cox and Professor Julius Gould are on its council. The unit says it will start with two areas of study. One will look at the "functioning and justification" of the welfare state and at social policies that affect industry, such as equal opportunities. The other will look at the way ideas about welfare and other social affairs are presented by the media, schools and universities.

The other education victim in this round of cuts is the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, which has lost its grant cut by £56,000 a year. The controversy decision to close the Centre for Educational Disadvantage in Manchester was announced last November.

Reducing the Council for Educational Technology's budget should not affect the government's new micro-electronics programme, which is being run independently of the council.

### 'Space invaders' could prove the key to the new technology

by Bob Doe

Electronic games like "Space Invaders" have been installed by ICI to help in the selection of operators for semi-automatic production equipment.

At the regional meeting held by the Department of Education and Science in Bradford last week, Dr. K. W. Hillier of ICI Fibres, Harrogate, suggested schools could learn from motorway cafes when it came to familiarizing pupils with micro-electronics. Many of these cafes had invested large sums in electronic games.

To find those suitable for training to operate microelectronic controlled machinery, ICI had recently acquired some of these games. The skills involved were very similar, Dr. Hillier told the educators and industrialists called to the Bradford meeting to discuss the work of schools.

There were complaints at the meeting that only five of the 29 projects chosen for support by the Government's "Electronic Technology in Education Programme" were in the North, worsening the concentration of high technology industries in other more favoured areas.

There were questions too about where the time or money for these developments in schools would come from. One speaker from Kirk-

textbook because their child was unable to have full use of a school copy. 60 per cent of parents of pupils in all state schools have bought a book recommended by but not supplied by, or available at, the school. 29 per cent of schools have now had to start purchasing or helping to purchase essential books. 40 per cent of PTAs are helping with the purchase of library books. In addition, it revealed that six schools in the survey received more than £10,000 a year from their PTAs—with the biggest contributors raising £20,000 last year and £24,000 this year. The majority, 63 per cent, raised less than £1,000.

Mr. Jones said: "We are united in our view that an individual school's parent teacher association should be allowed to decide to spend its money how it wishes." Controversy over parental contributions towards essential school books and equipment emerged earlier this year when Mr. Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary, said he welcomed parental contributions and was immediately attacked by all the teachers' unions.

There were calls for the use of computers more in subjects other than mathematics and science. Business studies, history and geography were mentioned.

For the first time teacher unions were asked to send representatives to the Bradford meeting. The National Union of Teachers and the TUC boycotted the earlier meetings at Birmingham and Newcastle because they objected to the way teachers were invited through local authorities.

Opening the conference, Mr. Neil Macfarlane, the junior education minister, challenged schools and industrialists in the Yorkshire and Humberside region to double the number of young people coming forward in that area for the £500 tax-free National Engineering Scholarships.

Only 263 of the 300 scholarships available were awarded this year, 19 to students from Yorkshire and Humberside. The scholarships supplement the normal grant and are open to anyone starting an engineering degree who is judged to be well qualified and motivated to take up a career in manufacturing industry.

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A teacher's plans to open her own school have survived a threat from the local education authority which had closed down the same school originally. Mrs. Veronica Griffiths bought a one-classroom school in Michaelston-le-Dale, near Cardiff, a few months ago after failing for three years to get a teaching job.

She paid £14,000 for the 130-year-old village school and school house which the Cornish L.A. had declared unviable. Mrs. Griffiths expected to buy the adjacent site containing the playground and a water tower for £8,500 but the education authority applied for planning permission for a house, which would have brought the value of the land up to around £8,000.

This week, however, the county planning committee turned down the authority's application and Mrs. Griffiths can proceed with her plans to open the school with an assistant after Christmas.



## Sacking of head is confirmed

The governors of the Sacred Heart RC comprehensive school, Redcar, last week confirmed their decision to sack the head, Mr Barrie Trueman.

The move has to be confirmed by the Cleveland education committee which has the power to veto the decision. The staffing sub-committee met last night and was expected to arrange a meeting in January to which Mr Trueman will be invited.

His supporters are pessimistic about the outcome. Mr Trueman, 46, has been head of Sacred Heart for the 10 years since it went comprehensive. He sparked off five years ago a row about staffing which has kept the school intermittently in the headlines ever since.

His differences with the governors arose from his refusal to accede to their request that several staff members who had been on strike should be allowed back to work.

Mr Trueman is assisted by his union, the Secondary Heads Association, in preparing his defence.

## DES does a U-turn on 17-plus exam

by Bob Doe

Government arrangements for new exams seemed to be in some disarray this week. First the ban on school exam boards taking part in the new 17-plus pre-vocational exam was lifted. Then it became clear that the question of whether there should be four or three groups of CSE and GCE boards to run the new common 16-plus has cropped up again. It is an issue which the Government thought was settled long ago.

When the new semi-vocational exam for one-year sixth formers was announced in the consultative document, Examinations 16 to 18, the Government said: "The GCE and CSE boards would not be engaged in the development of pre-vocational examination courses... but would concentrate on the development of the single system at 16-plus."

At the latest of the Department of Education and Science regional meetings in Bradford last week, Mr Philip Halsey, senior DES official responsible for new exams, said the boards would not be excluded after all. Their experience could be drawn

on though the main responsibility for coordinating the validation of the new exam would rest with a further education body.

The City and Guilds Institute is expected to be asked to take this on providing it is willing to work with bodies like the Schools Council, other exam boards and the Further Education Unit.

The CSE boards' committee on the Certificate of Extended Education (CEE)—the alternative exam for the new sixth former rejected by the Government—decided last week they should not try to go along with their courses. Though this decision has to be ratified by the CSE boards' standing conference, the CSE boards are now expected to cooperate with the CGI.

The CEE committee believed this was the best way of remaining in a position to safeguard the interests of the non-A level sixth former uncommitted to any particular vocation. The CSE boards say these are overlooked by the Government's proposals.

By the end of the summer ministers had decided there should be four regional GCE and CSE groups to run the new common 16-plus in

England, North, Midlands, London and East Anglia and the South.

No formal announcement has been made, though papers distributed for the Birmingham regional meeting last month made this clear. The groups each local authority was expected to be in.

The decision by the Government to a few Kent to drop out of the South Eastern CSE board, and the dissatisfaction of some other authorities with their allotted group has raised again the proposal that there should be just three English groups. It seems that Kent wished to ally with the University of London GCE board rather than the Aldershot-based Associated Examining Board which is not a "university board" in the way London is though universities are represented on it. The county wished to preserve its "strong links" with the university.

Kent is at present part of the South Eastern CSE board which was to join with the AEB in the Southern 16-plus group but which now appears to take the view that where Kent goes, it will follow. With six other London boroughs already lost to the London group, if Kent went too the South Eastern board's

income would be reduced by 10 per cent.

That would leave the Southern Group with the AEB, and the Southern and South Western CSE boards, though other authorities in the South and West may have "strong links" with the Oxford or London boards which could further erode the viability of the Southern group.

Elsewhere too there are signs of local authority unrest over the Government's plan. Norfolk has said the DES it is unhappy about being allocated to the London group and prefers the Midlands. Suffolk has looked at its position and is unlikely to request a change.

Some Hertfordshire head teachers said to be concerned about the link with London; though they may just be worried about their continued freedom to choose some of their boards.

Behind the "three groups" are the Oxford and Cambridge CSE boards which argue for greater economies of scale. Three groups would mean the Greenwhich division of the NUT, Mr Richardson, who is also an executive member for Inner London, and Mr Yardley raised complaints over the leaflet.

Behind the row is the long-running battle between the left-wing Rank and Pile group within the NUT and the establishment, as

## Police probe after council meals vote

by Richard Garner

Police have been called in to investigate whether a county council should have declared an interest over a vote by its authority to abolish school meals for all children except those eligible for free meals.

A complaint has been lodged with police in Lincolnshire by the National Union of Teachers against Mr Richard Uppall, a member of the county council's ruling Conservative group, who runs a grocery shop near a secondary school in Kilton, near Boston.

Mr Uppall made a statement in the council chamber last week in support of the decision to abolish the meals service as saying: "In my view it will be the salvation of many little

village stores. Many of them might do another £20 or £30 a week, which will make the difference between keeping open or closing."

Mr Uppall said he had approved plans to abolish school meals but gave a statement three weeks to come up with a financial case for continuing school meals in the county.

Since the introduction of a cafeteria system for secondary school meals, prices have risen and the taken in on school meals has slumped by more than 50 per cent.

Mr Uppall was quoted as saying in the interview: "Most of the kids in the village do come here and we are quite happily selling them a lot of stuff. My business is very much in the village. What he said: 'The police have received a complaint from the NUT and the

matter is under investigation.' The investigation is being carried out by detectives from the county police force and is likely to take between two or three weeks."

Mr Uppall said: "I am not in a position to say anything further. I have been tongue-tied because I am one of those people who speak his mind but I have no opinion at present."

Under the Local Government Act 1972, complaints against councillors who have failed to declare an interest can—if proved—lead to a maximum fine of £200 or even a month in prison.

A Lincolnshire police spokesman said: "The police have received a complaint from the NUT and the

## Call for closer links between schools and the community

Education has become the enemy of development. Institutions from universities down to schools tend to work in a vacuum, disconnected from the often desperate needs of the local community, and the new concept of "extended schools" education benefits only the student.

Mr Alec Dickson, founder of Voluntary Service Overseas and now honorary director of Community Service Volunteers, backed up his views with a series of visits to schools in the north and south of England, and the Institute of Rural Life at Home and Overseas last week.

In Hong Kong, the presence of 30,000 local people in refugee camps presented a "political" problem. Dickson said that the university, with its departments of politics, medicine and linguistics, was a repository of expertise and equipment. Yet when asked what the institution was doing to help, a senior administrator had replied: "We have nothing to do with them."

It often happened, Mr Dickson said, that past teachers helped present sufferers. "Drug addicts in Hong Kong were more often cared for by ex-teachers than by doctors. While then and now institutions of education not studying this process that turns re-socialisation into a form

of redemption."

Quoting Professor Alec Ross of Lancaster University, Mr Dickson said: "Let the touchstone of all our studies be: 'What is this contributing to the improvement of life for those who squat on the outskirts of our civilisation?'"

Talking to a 10-year-old child minding a herd of cattle in Africa, Mr Dickson said he was struck by the child's dedication to his task. He had one ear continually listening for any truck that might be coming towards his cattle. What he did not see coming over the horizon, however, is something called universal primary education which will deprive him of all his responsibilities and really cut him down to size."

There was, however, some hope. In many countries there were examples where older pupils were helping younger ones to the benefit of both, particularly in the area of recreation.

"Could we not abandon the chance that one child in the class might be a future Olympic gold medal winner and instead let PE teach training them to be re-socialised for younger kids? It would mean only a touch on the edge of the curriculum."

Brigadier Roger Streetfield, chairman of Oxfordshire education committee, died after a long illness, on May 1977 until October this year, has died after a long illness. He took over the chairmanship during a long dispute between the local authorities and teachers over threatened cuts and pay losses. He later won their support as he introduced a new measure to protect the curriculum in schools.

But the brigadier also had to bear the brunt of opposition to proposals to close the nursery service which the Government forced the county to drop, and to plans to end subsidised transport for children to church schools.

Brigadier Streetfield, who was 60, gave up the education post because of his health. He was buried at Black Rye in Oxfordshire on Wednesday.

## Labour accused of deceit over microelectronics

The former education minister, Mr Shirley Williams, was accused of "deceit" this week. She said about a microelectronics education programme but did nothing according to Mr Neil Macfarlane, a junior education minister.

Mr Macfarlane told Young Conservatives that Mr Williams announced a £12m programme but made no provision for it in the spending plans published for the year.

"In effect the Labour Government told the education sector that they might have a programme—but they had no money. This was a shameful deceit."

## Former Oxfordshire chairman dies

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## Language grant

Universities; local education authorities and institutions in Wales are to share a new Government grant of £515,000 to help boost Welsh language education, Welsh Secretary Mr Nicholas Edwards announced last week.

The money will be spent on books, teacher training and more courses for schoolchildren and adults.

## NUT officials in row over election run-up

## Left censured over leaflet

by Richard Garner

Three leading members of the National Union of Teachers have been censured for sending out a leaflet urging their colleagues to follow union policy and resist cuts in education spending.

The three—Mr Dick North, NUT executive member for inner London; Mr Dave Picton, treasurer of the Inner London Teachers' Association; and Mr Mike Loosley, ILTA vice-president—have been criticised by the NUT executive and told not to circulate similar leaflets again.

The row comes in the run-up to the annual elections for the Inner London Teachers' Association. Mr North is challenging Mr Bob Richardson for the post of general secretary of ILTA and Mr Picton is being opposed by Mr Colin Yardley, a former ILTA treasurer and secretary of the Greenwich division of the NUT. Mr Richardson, who is also an executive member for Inner London, and Mr Yardley raised complaints over the leaflet.

Behind the row is the long-running battle between the left-wing Rank and Pile group within the NUT and the establishment, as

represented by Mr Richardson and Mr Yardley. The three authors are Rank and Pile members.

Mr Malcolm Horne, NUT executive member for outer London, proposed a motion which was carried overwhelmingly at the union's executive committee last month. The action of the three was deplored and they were told to desist from "attempting to give members the impression that their unofficial views have any official support in the union". Mr Horne claimed the leaflet was "deliberately ambiguous".

He admitted that the three might be "legally correct" if they claimed that, by heading the leaflet, they were the undersigned officers of the Inner London Teachers' Association, they were making it clear it was not an official publication from ILTA. But he added that the first five words had been in small print.

Yardley said that ILTA had objected to the original leaflet for two reasons. First that it suggested teachers with a grievance about cuts should contact one of the three officials and made no mention of the role of local NUT associations in fighting the cuts, and second that

it suggested that members should take action and then seek approval for it. Instead of the other way round, with a sentence saying "if your school is in this position (understaffed), we would ask you to call a union meeting, urge members to take no cover action and inform your head you are seeking official union support".

The leaflet, however, clearly states on taking action over class sizes: "If you wish, one of us would assist you in making formal application to the union's action committee."

Mr North said he and his colleagues had sent out the leaflet on their initiative after "stalemate" had been reached in discussions with other officers of the association in sending one out. He said that it had called for "a statement of intent" from members before seeking official approval for any future action.

"We consider that we were totally vindicated in that a number of people did contact us after the leaflet and we took up cases through the ILTA and a number of gaps in the timetable were filled", he added.

NUS conference at Margate. Biddy Passmore reports

## Campaign to guard women students

The National Union of Students voted overwhelmingly this week to launch a campaign to "improve safety measures on college campuses to prevent sex attacks on women students."

At an emergency debate at the NUS conference in Margate, delegates pledged full support for a woman student's right to defend herself.

But they rejected a proposal in the resolution signed by more than 100 colleges that a woman could defend herself by "whatever means she deems necessary". The students thought that might lead to more violence by attackers.

The delegates adopted a 20-point charter for improved safety measures on the campus. It included security patrols, better lighting and emergency telephones placed at strategic points.

All women students should be issued with portable alarm buzzers. Lectures should end before dark and there should be increased bussing for women students to and from the campus. Self-defence classes

for women students should also be held.

The NUS is to stage a national torch-lit demonstration in Leeds or Bradford to emphasize the right of women to move after dark in safety.

Two students at universities in the cities have been killed by the Yorkshire Ripper.

NUS executive member Lindsay Miller, 24, who is responsible for the half-million women members of the union, said after the debate that a circular would be sent to all colleges, giving advice on how women could defend themselves. It will be based on advice given by the police that they could carry such weapons as perfume sprays, combs or ball-point pens.

The executive was instructed to take legal action against authorities who failed to introduce safety measures, and to press for increased financial compensation for victims of sexual assault.

In the debate women delegates expressed anger at the "sexist attitude of society" and films which show sex attacks on women.

## 'Wets' rebel against Tory support for loans

The ideological division within the ranks of Conservative students brought to a head by the loans issue, split wide open during the conference.

Delegates from the 14,000 strong Federation of Conservative Students, who include two members of the NUS national executive, spoke out strongly against the federation's official policy of supporting loans during the debate on grants and loans.

"Conservatives believe in the independence of students and I do not believe you get independence by making students depend on the state," said Mr David Stoy, FCS vice-chairman, told delegates amid heated applause.

The Conservative "wets"—self-styled "conservative students"—refused to distribute the federation's official policy during the conference. Instead, they handed out large yellow posters depicting a student being "loans" by "Don't let this happen during the conference."

The message reads: "Don't let this happen during the conference. Don't let this happen during the conference. Don't let this happen during the conference."

Mr Stoy said that the vast majority of FCS delegates to the conference was not in favour of loans. That was because most Conservative students who took an active part in the NUS were "to the left", he said.

NUS conference delegates voted overwhelmingly against the introduction of any form of loans system, and endorsed the union's claim for a 21 per cent increase in student grants next year. This is to cover an estimated 15 per cent rise in inflation plus an extra 6 per cent to restore the student grant in real terms to its level two years ago.

It met in full, the claim would cost nearly £90m. It would raise the grant for undergraduates living in London from £1,695 to £2,050, for those living outside London from £1,430 to £1,790 and for those living at home from £1,125 to £1,360.

On student union financing, the conference approved a motion instructing the executive "not to sell out". The union will continue to lobby the Government for a year's delay in implementing the new "non-autonomous" system of funding and for guarantees on union autonomy and funding levels.

Mr Young admitted that the vast majority of FCS delegates to the conference was not in favour of loans. That was because most Conservative students who took an active part in the NUS were "to the left", he said.

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## Personal column

Ted Wragg

## Political realities

Hoping that politics will be kept out of education is like hoping it will not invade sport, the arts, or, for that matter, that politics will be kept out of politics. The bookies would not even quote odds.

Politics is about the use of power and money. Education can offer children a route to power in their adult life and it spends billions of pounds. That is why the grubby palm prints of politicians are to be found all over it.

Yet few party heavyweights even mention education at the hustings, and there is complete resignation by the public that elections will be fought on economic issues, and that what the major political parties believe about education can be written comfortably on the back of a postage stamp, leaving enough room for a couple of verses of the National Anthem.

When the 1944 Education Act was being debated some MPs saw it as a means of opportunity for greater Parliamentary control. "Is it to be obligatory to give teaching and training to young people on the composition and duties of the Armed Forces of the Crown?"

Old Testament, and learn his 25 times table every night. But did that stop him winning six world wars single-handedly, becoming a Fellow of the Royal Society and writing four novels? Unfortunately it did.

The saddest aspect of local politics at the present is that alongside every hard-working, well-intentioned, solid citizen, giving considerable time and energy for the benefit of the community in one best democratic tradition of shared responsibility between professionals and lay people, there stands at least one odious mannequin bearing that lethal combination of power, stupidity and malevolence.

It is on these factors that war should be declared. My own simple pin-sticking peasant therapy is to invent evil stories about them.

Not many people realise, for example, that the controversial Panorama programme on transplant surgery was mounted because of Swinehead Education Committee, who fulfil all the conditions for being declared clinically dead, but continue to show up each month at meetings. Or did you know that when Swinehead Education Committee left their brains to science, they refused them on the grounds that they didn't have "tubes small enough to house them?"

Every education committee has its share of good guys of all parties. They are the salt of the earth, the voice of the common man and women, society's defence against too much arrogance or self-interest among the professionals. Their compassion and empathy are greatly needed in education. Support them during their temporary eclipse.

Most teachers, however, would be astonished if they exercised their democratic right under the 1960 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act or "Mugshot Charter". They attended a meeting of the local education committee. They would discover that matters like whether to close Teachers' Centres, reduce secondments and in-service programmes, increase class sizes or reduce spending on books and materials are decided by a handful of people.

Mr Doss, a 17-year-old ex-pupil of Churchy Manor School, London, said he expected his union would survive because it had subscription incomes of about £4,000 a year.

NUS membership has plummeted from an estimated 20,000 when it was established in 1972 to 5,000 last year. It now claims to have 8,000, although it admits they are not all fully paid up.

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## NEWS FEATURE

The great gales that blew through the middle and later 1970s decimated the country's teacher-training armadas. From a force of 155 colleges only 80 remain afloat. Now, barely four years later, a chill wind is again whistling through their rigging. What is on the way? Will it be us this time, they are asking. Why such foreboding? Quite simply, those involved in teacher education leading to a Bachelor of Education degree are manning a plant which this year failed to attract nearly 40 per cent of the numbers set for it. Some institutions were 70 per cent below target. Yet this may still not be the most serious disorder. Because the system is also producing nothing like the numbers of teachers wanted in some subjects and producing far too many in others.

While recruitment has been patchy for the past 10 years to subjects like craft, design and technology, science, mathematics and modern languages, the big fall-off in the popularity of teaching during the last four years has been reflected in a serious lack of applicants for these subjects. Only about 60 applications for a BEd this autumn were from science specialists and actual admissions probably meant that institutions providing a physics or chemistry BEd received on average about two students each this October.

At the same time over 4,000 applications (35 per cent of the total) were received for primary training. Yet the DES has already warned colleges in a letter as recently as last July that "until the later 1980s the demand for newly qualified primary teachers is likely to be small and could in some years be negligible."

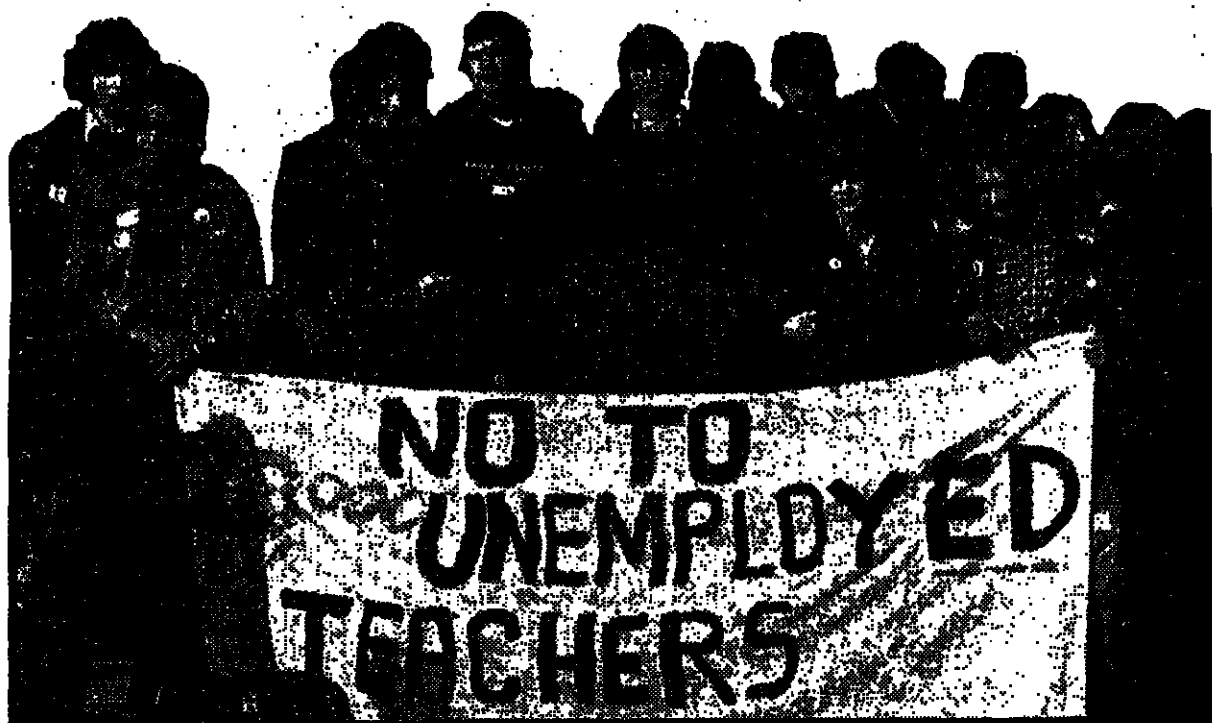
In the same letter colleges with only small PE groups were urged to close down these courses. Yet almost 2,000 applications (17 per cent of the total) were received for PE this year.

What about the future employment prospects of the staff in a system where this year some institutions were 70 per cent below intake target, chronically under-producing teachers in some subjects and over-producing others?

Despite the not too encouraging letter of July, utterances from ministers and their servants have been rather more minatory. In November last year Dr. Rhodes Boyson, junior minister for higher education, told the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers that in times when the need for economy is paramount local authorities could not be expected to

Once again, teacher training colleges—and their lecturers—face an uncertain future. Bert Lodge reports

## The sinking of an armada



Students fight back against cuts which have been described as "Draconian".

maintain all training institutions at their present size. Similar sentiments were repeated by the then head of teachers' branch, Mr Roy Walker, to a conference of teacher trainers in January this year.

Nevertheless, a more sanguine view prevails in some quarters. Dr William Taylor, director of the London University Institute of Education, thinks that another draconian hatchet job coming so soon "would be quite simply too much for the profession to take. Miss Joan Beacock, education secretary of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE), points out that when recruits are not forthcoming for the one-year courses in short-age subjects nobody suggests closing them down. So why do it for the BEd? She also believes the colleges would be better off if allowed to operate a totally free market.

Others emphasize the generally accepted opinion that the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course is simply not long enough to train a teacher and, as a professional qualification, the BEd is regarded as superior, particularly for primary teaching. Indeed, it is already being pointed out to sixth formers that as competition for places on a PGCE increases, if they are pretty sure now they want to teach they would do better opting for a BEd at the outset to make sure of getting a professional qualification.

Voluntary redundancies may appear the most painless solution but this can easily lead to a wealth of staff being left in the wrong places.

The growth of diversified degree courses in some institutes suggests another place where staff may be deployed, but as one head of a department asks, "What do you do with staff recruited in the 1960s to prepare students for the Teacher's Certificate, and whose own training was for two years more than 30 years ago?"

The origins of the story go back 20 years. In 1960, with a confidently projected increase in the birth rate, the teacher training plant was doubled between 1960-1972 from a total of 60,000 students to 120,000.

In fact, like generals ever preparing for the last war, DES officials were taking steps to deal with a birthrate which had been rising ever since the war but had already reached its peak by 1964 and was on its way down all through the remainder of the sixties (while many a new college building was on its way up).

Not until 1972 were the consequences of the still falling birthrate fully appreciated. The James Report of that year indicated a major re-

organization of teacher education was intended and the White Paper talked about supply, forecasting a need for 465,000 primary and secondary teachers in the 1980s (in 1965 the National Advisory Council on the Supply and Training of Teachers had talked about needing a force of 526,000 by 1981).

In a letter to training institutions this year the DES revealed that it now reckons the needs of the schools in the 1980s can be met by a teaching force "significantly below" 420,000.

An ominous hint of the troubles to come came from the then Education Secretary, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, in a Commons debate on the White Paper early in 1973: "We hope to streamline the colleges of education to the numbers for whom we can see employment."

But for some colleges no future was envisaged. Subsequent circulars made it clear that 19 colleges were to give up initial teacher training. The figure of 57,000 students going through the system would be adequate from 1981 onwards, it was announced early in 1976. By November this figure had been reduced to 45,000, and the possibility of a further 30 college closures announced.

It is not sufficiently appreciated by the rest of the educational world that 3,000 education lecturers will have lost their jobs by 1982 as a result of decisions taken up to 1977. Among those who do appreciate the scale too many assume the financial compensations of the Crombie code are generous enough to soothe the severest bruising. But college principals and officials of NATFHE are all agreed that the impact on the morale of the majority in teacher education was crushing.

And the process is not over. NATFHE is running its fourth annual and melancholy named "Conference of Closing Colleges" again this month.

But 1981 was to be the year when the last convulsions would have subsided and the teacher training system would have settled down and stabilized after nearly a decade of troubles.

Instead, many of those remaining, having survived one long period of peril and uncertainty, now find themselves in another.

What has happened? When the final list of college closures was agreed in 1977, one NATFHE representative is said to have observed to Hugh Harding, the under-secretary responsible for the operation: "Let's face it, Hugh, you've only done half the job even now."

The defensive reply of the DES to that is at first sight astonishing. It is "I was considered undesirable in 1977 to have a close relationship between the size of the system and the projected demands of the schools." Presumably they did not again want the embarrassment of the too precise a clairvoyance of the 1980s.

It was also being said that a more flexible system was hoped for from the reorganization. Polytechnics were ideal places to have teacher training. They gave student teachers a good mix. It also meant that in a huge institution where courses are often starting and closing down closing one more down would not be much noticed—rather on the principle that a slice off a cut loaf is hardly missed.

So an annual output of about 17,000 new teachers a year was projected for the 1980s. Of these about 10,000 would be from the one year course for graduates, the PGCE. But meantime other developments, some of which must have been foreseen, were beginning to change the picture.

The Government saw the need to reduce the size of the system as an opportunity in present the NUT with a prize it had long sought: an all-graduate profession. This was accompanied by a further raising of standards of entry—the requirement that from this year all new student teachers should have O levels in maths and English. This was all right so long as applicants came rolling up in pre-1972 numbers. But the excessive quotas

accepted and trained in the early 1970s were now entering fully trained—and not getting jobs. By 1977 the NUT was claiming 11,000 teachers out of work.

Unemployed teachers was a phenomenon unknown to anybody too young to remember the 1930s. It made news and the attraction of "safe" prospects that had always ensured a steady supply of the reliable if unadventurous to the job was simply punched off the pages of careers advice booklets.

The effect on recruitment was traumatic. In 1972 just over 60,000 school leavers applied to colleges of education; in 1975 it was 48,000; in 1978 the figure was down to 10,000 and this year it was 11,565.

This was still enough, theoretically, to fill the 9,100 places the DES had decided should be the 1980 target for a BEd course. But 3,000 of this year's applicants simply failed to qualify and not, as is popularly believed, because of the O-level hurdle in English and maths but because they mostly failed to get the necessary two A levels to start a degree course.

In other words, making it harder to qualify as a teacher had not resulted in attracting a better class of aspirant. Only 5,669 applicants were admitted to a BEd course in October, 38 per cent short of the target.

Meanwhile, the other route to entering the profession has become embarrassingly popular: the one year of teacher training open to any graduate, leading to the PGCE. The attraction of having a degree that may lead anywhere rather than one committed to a profession which cannot today guarantee a living is obvious in these economically threatening times.

Over 17,000 PGCE applications were received for 1980, an increase of 9 per cent on last year. Applications so far for 1981 are already 14 per cent up on this time last year. A total of 10,721 were accepted this year, 7 per cent more than last year.

This year's PGCE intake included 77 per cent more physicists than last year and more in other science subjects. It still has to be seen, however, how many of them actually enter teaching. The PGCE has a long history as a "fall-safe" route. In the same, the improvement in PGCE recruiting to shortage subjects like science has pointed out how the reverse process had occurred in recruiting to the BEd. While almost 1,700 of this year's 10,721 starting a PGCE were maths and science specialists fewer than 400 in these subjects elected to a BEd.

This is not the first year this trend has been discernible and it also applies to a lesser extent in craft, design and technology, modern languages and religious studies. The DES knows well how colleges have been responding to the situation—not only by over-recruiting other subject areas but also by accepting students for training in teach age groups where no teachers are currently needed. Hence the warning letter in July.

Theoretically what is to happen should depend on the recommendations of the recently constituted ACSET, the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Training of Teachers. The committee must again in February when it is expected to say whether the plant should be shrunk even further and how to achieve a balance between jobs and age ranges.

One party response to the situation is to throw the problem back at the Government. They wanted a system that could accommodate supply and demand. Now let them demonstrate their capacity by accommodating a bit of slack demand.

Probably the DES would be glad to. But local authority financial officers...?

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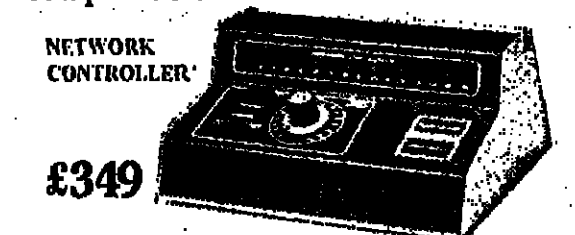
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## LETTERS

## A school's right to choose

Sir,—When the arguments about the principle of a common 16 plus system were being expounded five or more years ago there was general agreement that some important issues: syllabus proliferation needed to be checked, but syllabus choice must be the decision of each school or college. Proposals to establish four boards will clearly enable some rationalization whilst still allowing schools a degree of syllabus choice.

The DES consultative document on revised board structure became available in August and gave a three month period for comment. Surprisingly little has been heard about the replies to the DES but rumours of meetings of L.A. officers should give cause for concern. If it is true that moves are afoot to force schools and colleges to take the examinations of the new board serving the area in which the centre happens to be sited, to restrict a school to its regional board would remove a valuable and

healthy choice which has been a feature of English education since the public examination boards developed over century ago. Any such restriction is not only absurd on the economic grounds which presumably might have led administrators to think of this new slant on 16 plus organization.

Examination boards are major commercial undertakings, the new ones will be even more powerful in terms of financial resources. I do not question the independence of the boards, quite the contrary, but any move to provide a board with an assured clientele cannot encourage competition on economic grounds let alone the all important educational ones. A school in the London area might at present be a centre for one of half a dozen boards, certainly London, Cambridge and AEB are widely represented. The 1981 entry fees for the present boards for a typical four O level

	four	total
London	£4.00	£17.00
Cambridge	£3.50	£11.00
AEB	£3.50	£15.00

The entire profession should be alarmed by any suggestion that an institution will be directed to enter for a particular board when the four new groupings are established. Judging by the sample figures for the existing GCE boards a lot of much needed money will be going down the drain in some areas if the economies of the new organizations are based on the charges of their current GCE member. Hobson's Choice is not good enough and must not become a regulation slipped in at the last minute through the back door.

JOHN EARNshaw  
Headmaster,  
Bushey Meade School, Bushey,  
Herts.

## Bring religion up to date

Sir,—So the new Prayer Book issue has found its way into your correspondence columns at last! The Schools Council material may well contain some inaccuracies, but Dr. Norman's strictures on the "sat-on-the-mat" banality of Series 3 (The TES, November 14) are totally unnecessary.

Worship is a living experience. It cannot be confined to the forms and traditions of a totally different generation and culture. Our pupils can learn about worship and no doubt need to see, and it possible use, the language of 1662, which is undeniably beautiful. The Prayer Book is not simply literature; however, to be read and considered in abstract. It is the skeletal outline of patterns of religious thought and experience. Our God is the Living God of the twentieth century, understanding the semi-articulate prayers of some of our young people, as well as those of Cranmer.

Even Series 3 is remote in its theological distance from the experience of the vast majority of our ordinary young people. Series 3

brings us some way towards the realities of the twentieth century and we can begin to teach young people to experience it and use it in worship. The 1662 book can never become a matter of spiritual experience save for a minute proportion of today's children.

A living faith demands contemporary expression, as evidenced in some of our charismatically-orientated congregations. Even many Free Churches have been slow to grasp this, retaining patterns of worship and forms of expression more appropriate to the nineteenth century, when the twenty-first is nearly upon us. Our language is alive and changing, not just a fossilized tradition. Let our worship be the same: let it be vibrant and joyful, reflecting our experience of a God of grace and mercy.

If the Schools Council material, properly presented, leads pupils towards that goal, it will serve a most valuable purpose.

Headmaster, Opolary Manor School, Gillingham, Kent.

## Replace the old with the new

Sir,—It is mentioned in your report of the memorandum to the Department of Education and Science about religious education that among the organizations in the Religious Education Council deploring the current decline in religious education is the British Humanist Association.

It should be made clear that the great majority of humanists in the British Humanist Association, the National Secular Society, the

Rationalist Press Association, or in local humanist groups, or in no organization at all, want not any kind of revival of the present system of religious education but its replacement by a completely different system of genuine education about religion, philosophy and morality.

NICOLAS WALTER, Editor,  
New Humanist,  
88 Islington High Street,  
London N1.

## Conference spectrum too wide?

Sir,—A Conference on Religious Education was held at Caxton Hall, Westminster on Thursday, February 23, 1978, under the auspices of the Human Rights Society and with the backing of all the main political parties. The speakers included the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Hume, the Chief Rabbi and the Minister of State for Education.

There were four seminars: the role, approach, supply and commitment of teachers of religious education; the curriculum and content of Religious Education including Christian and Non-Christian Religions (the one I attended); moral education and the development of values; school assemblies and worship.

At the final session it was reported that for two of the seminars, the leader could not report on the outcome except to say that there was a total confusion of opinions.

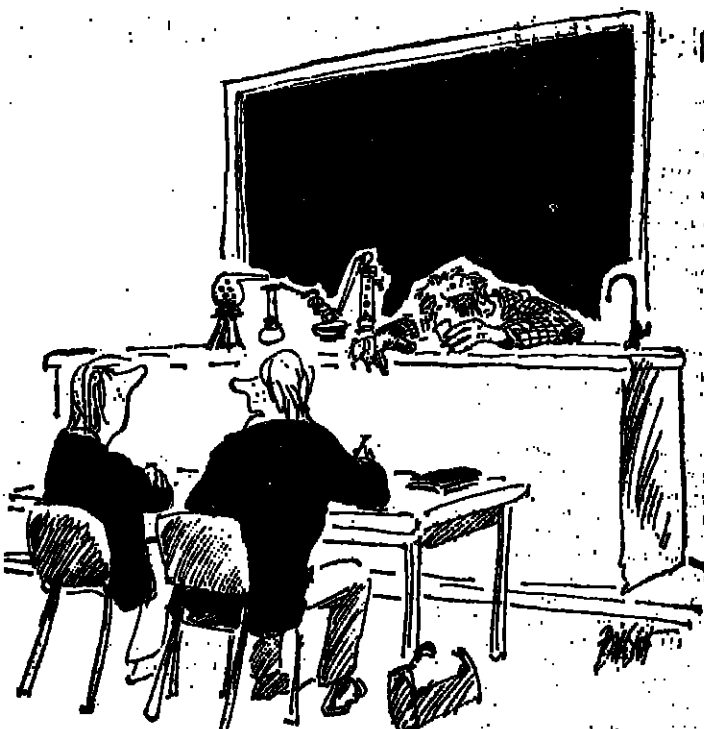
The aims of the conference were given in the letter of invitation. "The purpose of the conference is to survey the whole field of religious education in Britain today, identify the problems being faced in our schools and point the way to constructive solutions so that the nation's children will be able to share fully in our religious and moral heritage. While the conference will not be limited in its scope and will include representatives from all types of school, we want to concentrate in particular on religious education in the County schools, that is to say in the mainstream non-voluntary schools. We are anxious to secure the participation of those who are active in the classroom and who are fully briefed and aware of the issues relevant to the subject."

It would appear that though problems were in many cases identified, not much progress was made towards constructive solutions. Perhaps a conference of this kind cannot hope to arrive at solutions of any significance if the spectrum of outlook and belief are too wide.

I would suggest, as an alternative, one or more conferences of the mainline Churches including the Catholic Church, to cover the same ground, and see if it is possible to arrive at "Constructive solutions" as far as these Churches are concerned.

I had specially asked to be introduced to my Catholic teacher in a county school in the conference but I did not meet a single one though there were several from voluntary and independent schools. Ray-P. J. ROCHFORD, Ambleside, Cumbria.

Letters for publication should be as short as possible and should be written on one side of the paper only. The editor reserves the right to cut or amend them, if necessary.



"Don't you think his visual aid techniques are becoming just a bit passé?"

## Freedom to believe

Sir,—It was interesting to read Bert Lodge's report on GDR education (The TES, November 28), summarizing his findings during the recent "Britain-GDR Society" Education Study Tour.

However, as one of the other "six visitors from Britain" I should like to query one of his comments concerning entry to university. He says that "Desirable 'social attitudes' are sought and may not be found among applicants with a record of political indifference or explicit Christian affiliations."

May I remind Bert Lodge that it was precisely because I was concerned by Jonathan Steele's claim ("Socialism With A German Face" 1977) that there is discrimination against Christian children obtaining university entrance, that I made a special point of raising this issue on two occasions. On the first day asked at our meeting at the "Haus des Lehrers" whether it was more difficult for Christian children to gain admission to university, and we were told that there was no discrimination. Wishing to make doubly sure, I again raised the same question when we went to the "Thomas" extended secondary

## The search for independence

Sir,—I read with particular interest the report about Amanda Roberts (The TES, November 28); the young woman in care who was to be sleeping in her bed, in a care-dren's home at enormous cost to the taxpayer.

I am a foster parent to a responsible and secure nineteen-year-old girl who has been searching for a flat or bedsitter locally since before she was 18 and officially out of care.

Her social worker and I have both sent "begging" letters to the local district council housing officer (Charnwood, Leics), and I have also contacted my local councillor in an attempt to find her a place of her own.

The response is that unless she can show some priority (i.e. pregnant or one-parent family) she will, as a single person, be unable to obtain local authority accommodation until she is 35 years old! In the meantime she maintains a deplorable fruitless search through the local press and estate agents' offices, and another youngster who could be sleeping in her bed, in a care-dren's home at enormous cost to the taxpayer.

## Putting our case forward

Sir,—I should be most grateful if you could make clear to your readers that my letter (November 14) relating to the complaint made to the Advertising Standards Authority was written on behalf of CASE, the Campaign for the Advancement of State Education. I wrote on its newspaper and puts its title below my name, but it somehow got missed.

Not all your readers will know that Parents and Schools is the CASE newspaper, and since the decision to complain was a consensus, one by the Executive Committee of CASE, and I was merely their secretary, it is very

## LETTERS

## Our foreign schools need much more backing

Sir,—I wish to applaud the efforts of the representatives of six British schools in Europe in their meeting with the Minister of Education, Mark Carls, as reported in The TES, November 21.

Even allowing for drastic cut-back in education, home and abroad, it is surely a matter of deep concern, and not a little embarrassment, just how little the efforts of British-type schools abroad are recognized by the Government. As Headmaster of the Gov. school, Colombo Britanico in Cali Colombia, one of the many schools throughout the world, organized along British lines of pedagogy, I am constantly and acutely aware of a sense of isolation in comparison with the positions of our French, German and American colleagues abroad.

Our school, founded 25 years ago by the local Honorary British Consul and a group of prominent Colombian businessmen, has a student body of nearly 500 pupils, national and foreign, and provides education for entry to Colombian higher education as well as for entry to universities abroad through our participation in the International Baccalaureate system. The school's costly operation, including the recruitment and payment of 30 British contract teachers, is shouldered by the parents themselves, in their determination to provide education along British lines for their children, in the face of tempting alternatives from the other foreign schools in the area.

While recognizing that investment on a scale similar to that

undertaken by other foreign governments is unrealistic in these impoverished days, it seems to me that something more, even on a modest scale could be done, especially now, when the valiant efforts of the British Council have also been severely curtailed by cuts.

A first step could be the setting up of some system of school accreditation along North American lines of policy towards overseas schools. This could be easily done in conjunction with the British Council and could be followed up, perhaps, in these days of teacher unemployment in Britain, with the adoption of a scheme, similar to that of the French *Lycees d'outremer*, of "seconding" teachers for three to five year periods abroad. The effects of this experience on home-based teachers is obvious, and backed by some kind of employment guarantee, on their eventual return to Britain, would act as an incentive to many who contemplate, but reject, the ever-more risky challenge of teaching abroad.

British teachers in a school like the Colombo Britanico, not to mention its loyal hard-working parents, would find it difficult to appreciate any small gesture of solidarity with their efforts to promote British educational and cultural ideals abroad. Latin America, with its vast untapped potential, is surely worth at least a more efficient public relations exercise involving little strain on government economic policies. JACK CUSHMAN, Colegio Colombo Britanico, C.A. 5774, Colombia.

## Calligraphers turn their hands to the simple modern style

Sir,—I should like to make some observations on the review of my practice in Handwriting by Bridie Raban (The TES, November 21). First of all, this book of reproducible worksheets is a masterpiece of the "I Can Write" handwriting system (Gourdie & Atkinson) published by Macmillan Education in 1974. It is intended especially for children taking up this cursive style before the age of seven but can also be used for the infant classes in conjunction with the stage 1 material of "I Can Write".

It is above all a scheme to enable children to acquire a fluent cursive hand and everything in it is therefore directed towards this, with the alphabet divided into family groups, and having the same basic strokes. I suspect Miss Raban has been through this carefully and digest what is essential in the preparation of a book devoted to the teaching of handwriting, especially a system as practical and effective as the Simple Modern Hand.

TOUGLAS STREET, KIRKCALDY, Fife, Scotland.

Sir,—Bridie Raban's review of T. Gourdie's *Practice in Handwriting* (The TES, November 21) is an unusually amusing commentary on yet another current educational fad, which young children are being afflicted: this is that learning to write is an extension of learning to spell. Next we shall hear that elementary French must be taught with a vocabulary of words that look the same in English.

The concept is totally fallacious for two reasons: (a) Reading and writing are learnt at different speeds. (b) Handwriting, like riding a bicycle, is a system of precise movements and a kinesthetic skill. It is not an extremely difficult task to acquire and therefore does not require the kind of drill and repetition that is so often recommended. Mr. Gourdie, like all the best of his predecessors over the past 400 years, is quite right to recommend practising groups of letters which are kinesthetically related. It is so easy to laugh at the sequence r, n, m, x, z because it does not occur in words. Dr. A. S. O'LEARY, The Glade, Brook Road, Worsley, Galsmire.

## In tune with Pimlico gifted

Sir,—In her article "A Legacy for Tomorrow" (The TES, November 28), Susan Thomas claims that the provision for musically gifted children in Pimlico School is unique within the State Education System. "Only now in Strathclyde," she adds, "is another authority engaged in building anything similar".

In fact the special music course at Douglas Academy, Milngavie in its second year and I am sure that Walter Blair, the Director of Music, would be delighted to give you further information on that scheme.

In Lothian we are also establishing a specialist course within both a comprehensive school and a neighbouring primary school. This, I believe, is indeed unique within the state system. I enclose a leaflet about the scheme and would of course be happy to answer any further questions should you wish to make the true facts of the situation north of the border known to your readers. NEIL BEILL, Director, Lothian Specialist Music Scheme, Broughton High School, Edinburgh.

## Take those drills away

Sir,—At the risk of further publicising our lack of good sense (John Maddox, The TES, November 21), I offer the following points, which emerged during the recent public inquiry into test-drilling in the Cheviots.

(1) Much of the information from a particular drilling operation is site-specific. As crystalline rocks in Scotland have already been investigated, it would seem that most of the information obtained will relate to the suitability of the Cheviots as a nuclear dumping ground. Professor J. Caskin, a resident of Rothbury, has likened the situation to a request for minor drilling beneath Durham Cathedral. A harmless motive might bring a tolerant response, but the reaction would be very different if a vein of plutonium was thought to be present.

(2) No one knows if the results obtained (if drilling goes ahead) will retain their validity, once the Kielder reservoir is completed.

(3) Bore-holes of the proposed depth can not be back-filled satisfactorily. The usual filling substance is concrete, but research has shown that under these conditions of free-fall the holes would be filled in fact with a porous layer of big aggregate, covered by a relatively soft layer of sand and cement. There is

no possibility of restoring the geological integrity of the area, once boreholes have been drilled.

(4) The proposed drilling sites at Usway and Threestonburn are in the National Park. Already one fifth of the Northumberland Park has been compromised as a Ministry of Defence firing range and another one fifth has been given over to the Forestry Commission.

Many of the objectors are people who have "retired" to these hills specifically to be in part of England's finest wilderness. For this privilege, I am happy to spend the next 30 years of my teaching life on a scale two. I sincerely believe (good sense or no) that we have a duty not only to maintain the appearance of England's best countryside but also its feeling of unspoiled splendour. Northumberland has held on to traditions long since abandoned in the rest of the country and this draws many visitors to the area. It is wrong even to contemplate depriving people of one of the few remaining refuges from twentieth-century pressures, and at the moment it would be unlawful to do so. We in Northumberland simply want to keep it that way! ANTHONY ROBE, Mount Hooley Cottage, Whittingham, near Alnwick, Northumberland.



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Posters, fold the youth employment

level

## School to work

Draft report for MSC reveals poor 'success rate'

## Centres for disabled may go

Ministers and their advisers in the Manpower Services Commission have always insisted that help for the handicapped among the young unemployed is priority. Now "The TES" has evidence that the commission is actively considering closing down the Employment Rehabilitation Centres and proposing alternative arrangements for the recently disabled and the disadvantaged. Mark Jackson reports.

The Manpower Services Commission is considering closing down or cutting back the network of Employment Rehabilitation Centres which help prepare disabled people for work. Its decision will be influenced by a detailed report on the centres which is now in draft.

The 27 centres between them run courses for 3,000 young people a year, as well as 12,000 adults, and the Warnock report on education for the handicapped young strongly recommended their expansion.

The draft report comes from a team of officials and outside experts set up by the Manpower Services Commission to review the work of the centres in detail.

The review team, which is headed by the commission's chairman, Sir Richard O'Brien, says that "dramatic" changes have occurred in the commission's resources and the demands made on them by rising unemployment since it began work more than a year ago, and are now forcing the commission to decide which services to cut. While the team itself declines to judge the value of employment rehabilitation against other MSC activities it says its evidence should help the commission in "the difficult business of determining priorities".

The review team had discovered that:

• the centres' main work now is to get people fit for work again after an accident or sickness.

• most of the clients are out of work because they are generally disadvantaged or deprived, rather than because of their particular physical or mental disability.

• the ERCs are the cheapest of the main programmes of work preparation for the unemployed, but are not the most successful at getting people into jobs or training.

• that the service should cater properly for both the recently disabled and the long term disadvantaged as separate groups needing different help.

• the development of work experience with employers as an alternative to ERCs for some of the disabled, and for others sheltered employment or placements in occupational therapy departments or with schemes run by voluntary bodies.

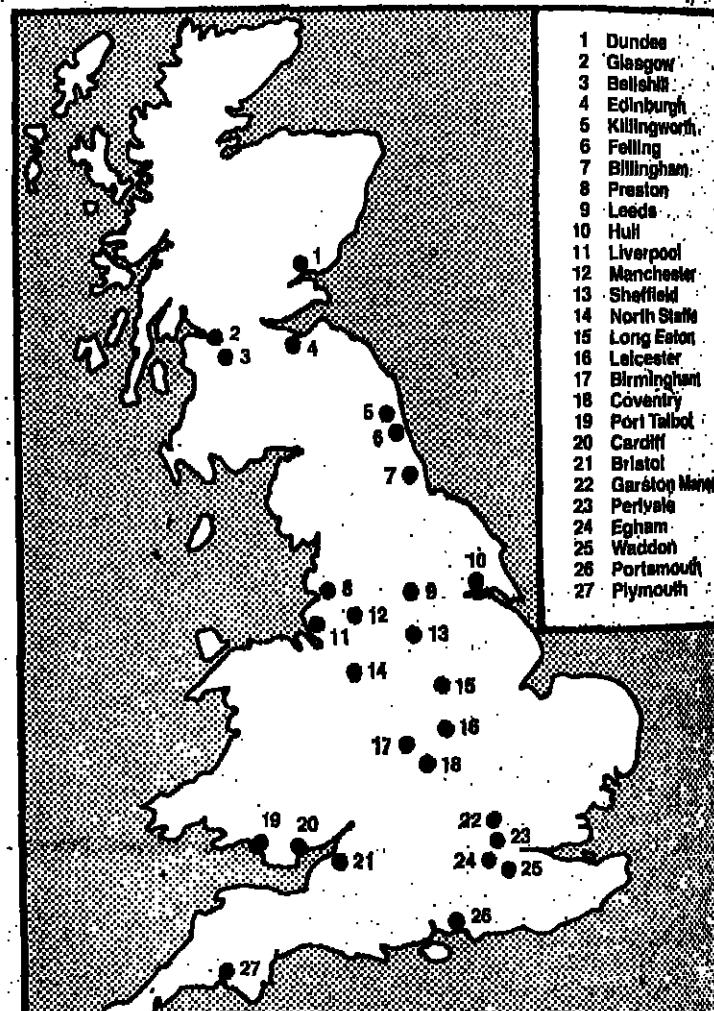
• More efforts to place the disabled in jobs instead of sending them to ERCs.

• More personalised counselling as local level to break down the rigid institutional character of the service.

• Closer liaison with health services to get more people referred.

• An eventual splitting of the service into two components, one for the recently disabled and the other part of an employment rehabilitation programme for all the disadvantaged.

The review body says that four out of five of the clients are now people who have been disabled since childhood, or have incurred their



The siting of Employment Rehabilitation Centres.

disability before becoming unemployed. Around a third have not been ill for a significant spell during the three years before they start these courses, and only one in 10 is referred to the service by doctors. It is clear, says the report, that the ERCs have become part of the services for the disadvantaged, and are dealing with a large number of people with multiple employment handicaps. One in six has never had a settled job, and a high proportion are young people.

The report says that less than half those who are given ERCs courses, which usually last from six to eight weeks, are in work or training for a job six months after they leave, and that some would have found work anyway. But it points out that re-employment rates are affected by levels of unemployment, and that ten years ago, two thirds or more of those who passed through the centres got jobs.

The review team was worried to find that fewer than half of those recommended for training actually had started courses a year after leaving an ERC.

The cost of ERC courses compared with two other programmes run for the disadvantaged unemployed by the MSC—the Special Temporary Employment Programme and the long established Wider

Opportunities Courses run in the centres are:

The review says it was unable to make a simple comparison of the effectiveness since both WOC and STEP had to operate principally in areas of high unemployment, and the fact that these other programmes do not offer a better solution, does not mean that ERCs are the best way to tackle employment rehabilitation.

A number of elements of the present ERC system would be appropriate to a wider programme for the disadvantaged, such as the chance to undertake sheltered work under realistic conditions, and the use of assessment, and the report says that there are disadvantages in the present ERC system.

The report, in the opinion of the possibility of widening rehabilitation to all disadvantaged unemployed, does not suggest what arrangements should be made for disabled young people who might be displaced by the pruning of the ERC network. The implication appears to be that they should take their chance in the

labour market.

To ensure that the programme developed the quality needed for the transformation into a training and vocational training scheme, the vocational profiles and learning programmes would have to be prepared for every young person, and clear that whoever did the programme, it would be the same.

It was now clear, said Mr Foster, that the MSC's area boards were irrelevant, and that coordination would be achieved at local authority level.

features

# Catching the 22

The Warnock Report's finding that a fifth of all children were in need of special help turned out to be more than right in Oxfordshire. Michael Burnham and Gwyn Robins describe what the authority has done about it

The Warnock report, and the subsequent Government White Paper, have posed serious challenges. The wide concept of special education related to children's individual needs and not to specific disabilities, and embracing some 20 per cent of the school population at any time, implies not only a reallocation of resources but a substantial increase.

At this time of increasing economic constraint, any initiatives and impetus for change have to come from local authorities. Oxfordshire, like other authorities, has been trying to follow the Warnock recommendations. The report suggested that when planning future services, we should assume that "one in six children at any one time and up to one in five children at some time will require some form of special education provision".

In 1978 the county's special schools and units catered for 2,200 pupils—2.5 per cent of the total school population. A further 200 pupils were given special help in ordinary schools, and 400 went to independent boarding schools outside the county. If Warnock's assessment of needs was to be believed, Oxfordshire's ordinary schools contained some 15,000 pupils whose special needs were not being fully met.

So we intensified our review of special education provision, and undertook a survey of all primary school children in the county. The survey (which relied heavily on the Rutter scale and its 10 categories of handicap) confirmed the Warnock finding: 22 per cent of Oxfordshire's children in ordinary schools were identified as having special needs. The survey's results were further confirmed by individual reports from the school medical and psychological services.

It was decided that if resources were to be effectively mobilized, a variety of pilot schemes had to be set up throughout the county, and closely monitored. Last year, after further consultations, a "special needs" paper was put to the education committee.

Recommendations were eventually accepted by the full county council. Financial savings were to be made by cutting back on future "hot" county placements for Oxfordshire children, in order to improve and expand provision within the authority.

In line with the Warnock recommendations, we must try to ensure that teachers in special schools see integration with mainstream children as a challenge, and that of the children's isolation and that of the children's placement for placement in special schools.

Nevertheless, we must try to ensure that teachers in special schools see integration with mainstream children as a challenge, and that of the children's placement for placement in special schools.

Repetitions to integrate the

As a result head teachers were gradually released from teaching a class full time, and have been able to establish closer working links with other professional agencies, mainstream schools and the community as a whole. At present three special schools are actively engaged in discussions which will result in special classes being set up in local primary schools, staffed and equipped by members of the special school staffs.

The idea is to create a series of bridges along which pupils can travel into the mainstream. Special school children will work alongside mainstream children in ordinary classes, we hope for increasing amounts of their time.

A special day school for the physically handicapped has already linked with a nearby secondary upper school to give the handicapped pupils a chance to follow CSE and O level courses alongside the others. These developments encourage the special school staffs to look outwards, and establish avenues towards normality for their pupils.

In the last two years, Oxfordshire has also expanded provision in certain special schools. Oxford city's primary day maladjusted school has been extensively renovated and increased its roll in the past year. A new secondary half-day and half residential school for some 60 maladjusted pupils aged 11 to 16 has been set up in Oxford.

In-service training of teachers and helpers is seen as a keystone of future development. Two diploma courses in special needs, one part and one full-time, have started at Oxford Polytechnic, and are already oversubscribed. Next September, experienced and successful teachers will be seconded from their schools to work with the county's advisory staff and people from the Oxford university department of education.

Within a two year period, we hope that at least one teacher from every primary school in the county will have attended a successful in-service course on "handicap awareness". The course is backed by a booklet, just published by Oxfordshire, on children with special needs.

Innovations are not always geared to mainstream integration. For instance two full-time teachers of travellers' children have started work in a new mobile school based on a caravan site in Oxford city.

Repeated attempts to integrate the

children had met with limited success, and the new school will cater for some 10 to 15 children at a time on the site, in order to improve provision for children in hospitals, and prevent the isolation of separate wards, a head teacher has been appointed to co-ordinate education in the city's hospital service.

The debate on ways and means to interpret and implement the Warnock recommendations will continue. Plans are afoot to integrate mentally handicapped children, at present in a hospital unit, into the community within the boundaries of Oxford city. A residential hostel is being planned for 16 of them.

A long-term aim is to establish resource departments in every secondary school, each with a multi-disciplinary team, to meet the special needs of children in mainstream schools. Two research projects are being set up in Banbury and Henley where staff, equipment and resources will be provided in ordinary and special schools so that a programme of integrated special education can be implemented and monitored.

The publication of the Warnock Report has heralded a new era in special education in Oxfordshire. In our efforts to acquire new resources and to improve and rationalize existing ones, we have had to look more closely at the needs of our pupils than we had done previously. The result in Oxfordshire has been a county-wide debate on a scale hitherto unheard of, involving teachers in ordinary as well as special schools, interested professional bodies, advisers and administrators from every persuasion.

There are still many shortcomings in our provision, and many pupils and teachers require further help, advice, and assistance at a time when the means to provide these things are not readily forthcoming. But we cannot wait until the economic situation improves. The children we have identified as having special needs are in our schools now, it is only through experiment and the redeployment of existing resources that we can lay down a firm foundation on which to build a network of provision for them.

Michael Burnham is senior adviser for special education, and Gwyn Robins is special education officer in Oxfordshire.

DES circular 4/73

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## features

Philip Venning traces the changing role of the Education Secretary's political adviser, from the days of Reg Prentice to the present

# Yes, and there again no, minister

In government, education policy under the spell of a sinister faceless man, who slips unchallenged between the back entrances of the Department of Education and Science, Downing Street and secret Tory cabals? There is certainly a feeling on Labour benches that more should be known about Mr Stuart Sexton, the political adviser to Mr Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary.

Mr Sexton's close interest in the Government's toughest educational policies—the Assisted Places Scheme, the reform of ILEA and comprehensive reorganization—have raised questions about the exact nature of his role. And an erroneous claim in *Private Eye* that he was Mrs Thatcher's spy in her old department added to the intrigue.

What is true is that Mr Sexton, with his unregimented party political approach, is very different from his three Labour predecessors at the DES—Professor Maurice Peston, Stella Greenall and John Lytle—who all, in different ways, fitted comfortably into the old liberal education consensus.

Special advisers were invented in 1974 to give ministers extra muscle in their departments. There was a deep-seated Labour belief that powerful civil servants worked to frustrate Labour policies; and that ministers were often too green to stand up to the skillful opposition of their senior civil servants.

Was this true of the DES, which has always been slightly separate from the mainstream of Whitehall and where policies may take a whole generation to come to fruition? Was there a job for the advisers to do, and were Peston, Greenall, Lytle, and Sexton the right people for it?

Yes. Minister, the TV series, has set the popular image of the political adviser. Frank Welsel, the adviser in the BBC situation comedy, is a relentless party man, a humourless reminder to the minister of his political commitments and the dangers of being seduced by the civil service line. The official orientation is cold-shoulder him.

Mr Peston, however, was treated in a more civilised way and was given a room, in some sense, by the ministers and civil servants. Probably there were doubts in the early days. The civil service did not know what to expect, neither Reg Prentice nor Fred Mulley, the first two education secretaries, to have advisers, specially qualified.

Maurice Peston himself initially felt that in the DES any problems over policy (such as moves to restrict the public schools) arose more from fecklessness of purpose on the part of the politicians than hostility from the civil service. But he soon recognized that the forming and implementation of education policy was not a simple one-way process from minister to civil service. Policy was formed in discussions, and there was a need for someone to strengthen the minister's hand in those discussions. Peston was ideally qualified for the job.

—provided the adviser was to act as a powerful alternative source of policy within the department rather than a ministerial leg man. A professor of economics at Queen Mary College, London, a former civil servant, and an experienced educational polemicist, he was also an unshakeably committed Labour supporter.

Here was someone the civil servants could respect. He knew how they operated; he knew the age-old enemy, the Treasury; he spoke their language. He was not dogmatic. He saw his job as being provocative. He could and did challenge time-hallowed conventions, such as the belief that small classes were automatically desirable. He was willing to discuss student loans.

His relations with the civil servants were good—perhaps too good, according to one former civil servant, who wished that the DES had been faced with more abrasive policy options. But there was one crucial issue of philosophy on which he found himself out-of-step with the then current educational orthodoxy, and consequently both with Reg Prentice and the DES.

He believed, like the team of OROD experts who wrote a critical report on the DES shortly after he arrived, that the department could no longer justify washing its hands of areas of policy that were by tradition, rather than statute, the province of the local authorities.

He deliberately set out to create a new intellectual framework for greater central intervention, and was one of the first to question whether the DES could continue to remain outside "the secret garden" of the school curriculum. He could not do much in a year, but he made some of the first moves towards the present policy of a more positive role for the DES.

**John used to restrain Shirley from doing wild things, a civil servant remembers**

One of the cornerstones of education is that all our pupils have a broadly similar education. This is a noble aim, but it has to be paid more time worrying about how to influence local authorities than about how to influence civil servants. Maurice Peston ran into some resistance from traditionalists in the department over the adult literacy programme, which neatly bypassed the local authorities, and more importantly over the decision to abolish the direct grant and push through comprehensive reorganization. He did much preliminary work on what became the 1976 Education Act, which enforced the ending of selection.

In some cases he found the DES line made more sense than the official party line. In my first week I was convinced by the civil servants of the rightness of the fallacy that the state, in the context of education, had to be fairer and that I had

to persuade Reg. The two men had become personal friends and Prentice was able to try out his ideas on Peston—one of the most useful functions of any special adviser.

"There is value in having a special adviser who is a friend and confidant of the new minister, who is often a bit lost in his department," said a former official. "But in general there is a tendency for the adviser to end up as a monkey on the minister's back."

An adviser is a personal appointment, and so Peston left when Reg Prentice was moved from the department. After a brief interregnum, Mrs Stella Greenall became the adviser to the new Education Secretary, Fred Mulley. The appointment was a gamble. She had been a highly regarded official for the National Union of Students for 23 years, as well as a faithful party member in the Fabian tradition.

There were fears that her ignorance of schools might be a handicap. But she was keen to learn, and eventually stayed longer than any other adviser. Her special knowledge of student grants was immediately useful, as was the work she did later on the ill-fated plan for educational maintenance allowances, and on student union reforms.

Like Peston, she might have been a civil servant herself in another incarnation. Few ministers have the time (or interest) to run their departments as departmental managers, and Stella Greenall really got into the detailed workings of the DES. Rather than stimulating new policy, she acted as a progress chaser and trouble shooter, easing the progress of policies through the department. She aimed to spot tricky issues before they reached ministerial level, to be forewarned of deals being worked out between the DES and Treasury officials which might curtail the effectiveness of a policy.

Sometimes she may have got too close to detail. One of the unique parts of any adviser's work is acting as an informal contact between the minister and constituency parties (and to a lesser extent backbench MPs). If a local row is threatening, a good adviser will hear of it before the civil service, and is certainly freer to try to head it off.

Stella Greenall did work on some controversial Section 13 applications but one civil servant considers she "rather wasted time on a few arbitrary local rows, such as one in Hertfordshire where the Labour Group were against a school plan".

She remained at the DES when Mrs Shirley Williams took over as Education Secretary, even though Mrs Williams brought with her a friend and adviser from the Department of Prices, John Lytle. There was plenty of work for two advisers with such an energetic and widely connected minister.

When Mrs Williams came to Education, she was unusual in being a senior member of the Cabinet and Labour Party with all sorts of outside commitments. Inevitably it generated much extra work, and a constant flood of letters that had no bearing on education. These were generally better answered by an adviser than by a minister. It also meant that she had numerous outside commitments and political meetings to attend and speeches to make which were really party rather than DES responsibility.

John Lytle had already been doing this work for Mrs Williams at Prices, so it was natural that he should continue, particularly in view of his excellent contacts within and knowledge of the Labour Party. By contrast, he knew virtually nothing about education, except what he had picked up on race and deprivation while he was at the Race Relations Board.

When he did get involved in departmental business, he concentrated on these issues and related ones like overseas students. His outside experience was also valuable in dealing with the trade unions, like the other advisers he had an anti-inflationary feeling about the teacher unions, particularly during the winter of discontent in 1978. The DES had little experience of the school caretakers' union, and he was able to play a part in the discussions to which they were invited.

But it was his very special relationship with Mrs Williams that was his most important contribution. He knew her so well that civil servants used him as a reliable guide to what she was thinking. Replies to parliamentary questions could be filed on her lines. He was also able to stand up to her. John used to

restrain her from doing wild things, a civil servant remembers.

Near the end of her time at the DES, Mrs Williams came under attack from some Labour activists who felt that she had gone too far down the back-to-basics road, and both Greenall and Lytle had a job to do defending her in important groups such as the Labour Party NEC's education subcommittee.

When Mark Carlisle became secretary of state in 1979, the civil servants were quickly relieved that there were to be no drastic interruptions to the mainstream of education policy. And Stuart Sexton, the new adviser, seemed keen to take what for some officials must have been the more distasteful parts of the Tory manifesto—particularly the Assisted Places Scheme.

Formerly with Shell International Chemicals, Stuart Sexton had been a member of Croydon education committee—appropriately as a councillor for Selodon. In July 1975 he was taken on as a general factotum by Mr Norman St John Stevas, then opposition spokesman on education, who was pleased to have someone to undertake the more prosaic parts of the job.

Sexton soon showed his political mettle. A local authority near Manchester was likely to go Conservative in forthcoming elections, and the Tory group had plan to save their grammar schools moments before they were due to go comprehensive. Sexton became an adviser in the Tameside councillors, and was closely involved in the dispute right through to the eventual victory in the House of Lords.

**The advisers have probably had to spend more time worrying about how to influence local authorities than on battling with obstructive civil servants**

It was then that he started detailed work on what became the Assisted Places Scheme. St John Stevas had discussed it with the direct grant schools as a way of meeting the opposition commitment to restore the direct grant. Stuart Sexton has spent much time on it since then. He may not be its architect, but he certainly is its chief builder.

The most striking difference between Sexton and his predecessors is that he sees himself as a politician rather than a bureaucrat. "I could never give impartial advice," he says. While still with St John Stevas, he was a parliamentary candidate for Burnley, and when he transferred to Mr Carlisle, he was still on the look out for another seat. Mark Carlisle calls Sexton "his right wing conscience".

Sexton has also been involved with the various proposals to reform ILEA. He himself was a co-opted member of ILEA for a while. But he is not an unwavering supporter of all right-wing education policy. He thinks vouchers are unworkable, and is lukewarm about the old Rhodes Boyson idea of national testing in primary and secondary schools.

His relations with the civil servants have been more formal than those of the three Labour advisers. He keeps himself in himself, and though he has cooperation from higher ranking officials, he complains of less help from some further down the hierarchy.

In retrospect, the civil service tends to play down the value of all the advisers. One retired DES official conceded that they had been useful at a trivial level, but claimed that in the past many of their suggestions had been carried out despite the fact that they were not properly considered. But much of an adviser's contribution is in personal dealings with the minister, out of the earshot of officialdom.

The DES is an elusive department, long accustomed to shuffling off awkward responsibilities on to local authorities and others. Educational policy evolves at a snail's pace; the result of complicated interaction between decision makers and pressure groups which sometimes escape the DES in the latter category. By the time the balance slightly more towards the minister, the advisers have had to continue to have an important job to do.



This week Ludus Dance-in-Education team arrived in Liverpool, at the conclusion of a nationwide tour which has marked the company's emergence from the relative obscurity of the cash-starved Theatre-in-Education world into the limelight of national press coverage, with reviewers carolling their praises.

They recently performed at the Riverside Studios, a well-known supporter of modern dance performance, at whose door they have been politely knocking for some time. It is, though, indicative of their oddball position as the country's only Dance-in-Education team that they performed at the Riverside at the invitation, not of the management, but of Hamworthy Youth Arts Festival.

The work which they have been touring to upper schools and to adult audiences has been Power, a combined package of one-hour dance performance and special movement and discussion workshops. The dance performance tells the story of Karen Silkwood, the American nuclear power worker contaminated by plutonium, who was killed in a mysterious car crash on her way to disclose the plant's lax safety standards to the press.

Power interprets the events of the Silkwood saga with just four dancers: two play workers in the plant (including Silkwood herself), one white-coated supervisor, and one smooth-suited executive. His words are spoken, but there is a rich tapestry of electronic and rock-based music on tape to underpin the dramatic action.

The narrative backbone of the piece is a sequence of danced scenes, mostly set in the nuclear plant itself. Here, to a bubbling electronic beat, the white-coated workers construct a living "symbol of that eerie and threatening work process." After work, they remove their protective clothing, shower, and are checked by a clicking Geiger counter. For Karen Silkwood there is no diminution of that fast clicking, and she returns to the shower to scrub desperately at her contaminated flesh. As realization of what has happened dawns on her, she lets out a horrified scream, a moment made especially unsettling because it breaks the dance convention.

Knowing herself now to be possessed by the devil in the pill, she traces evidence of the contamination and places it in a brown folder. The remainder of the piece focuses on her attempts to smuggle the evidence past supervisor and executive and out to the press. In one sharply funny sequence, the executive tries to charm the documents out of Silkwood by engaging her in a seductive tango. While he propels her around the floor, his blank eyes remain fixed to the folder she has dropped on the floor. Gradually he begins to enjoy the undoubted prowess at tangoing, and the whimsy of a smile plays about his face as he secures his vanity before the audience. Meanwhile Silkwood escapes with the folder.

The sequences have a richness that comes from being any kind of propaganda. It allows its audience

to make connexions between different modes of power that can later be objectified in the post-show workshops and in the classroom.

Ludus was formed in 1975 by a group of people with both dance and education training. They now number eight, with five dancers, a stage manager, an administrator, and an educational advisor. This last post is filled by Michael Merwitzer, who came to the company via the teaching of marketing technique ("I'd been trying to teach a course on the social responsibility of marketing..."), an MA in Education, and teaching at the Abraham Moss school in Manchester. He explains his belief in Ludus's eclectic brand of modern dance as an effective communicator of ideas to young people:

"I used to work with remedial kids at the Scott-Lidgett school in London. I found that the best way to get them to write and develop ideas was to get them out of the school and down to Bermondsey Antique Market or the Tower of London. In the same way, dance was an important opportunity to provide a shared experience which was non-verbal, which didn't have to be immediately articulated. I had been looking at people like Paolo Freire and their use of the experiences of the group you were trying to teach. I was concerned with looking at the child's informal culture."

That culture, as manifested for instance in disco dancing, is assimilated and transformed into the actual choreography of Ludus' shows. Also central to their choreographic method is an insistence that movements should have their roots

in reality, rather than in this or that dance tradition. Lesley Hutchinson, the company's principal choreographer, explains they use actors' techniques: "We do character research before we move."

"What we are concerned about is the political and social and economic and emotional situation of that individual and how that informs the way they behave and move. It's getting away from stereotyped moves and from dancers falling back on technique. We take our choreography from the everyday gestures of ordinary people. We are concerned with Laban's idea that the way people move and hold themselves is to do with class, politics and economics."

That political perspective, and the company's conviction that dance can express ideas and teach concepts, is the cause of some suspicion in the dance world. Power raises questions about the specific nuclear issue, but also about the power of individuals to make decisions in the teeth of the power of big corporations and the state.

A crucial part of the programmes Ludus take into schools is the movement workshop which follows the dance piece. Here, the class (usually second and third year secondary pupils) works with dancers to explore the ways in which power is manifest in movement and gesture. Lesley Hutchinson explains:

"The aim is to give the kids two contrasting ways of moving. You might limit the space. You're asking them to move in straight pathways, to lead with the chest... you create a straitjacket that movements should have their roots

## features

Tony Coult on the success of the pioneering dance company Ludus

# Roots in reality

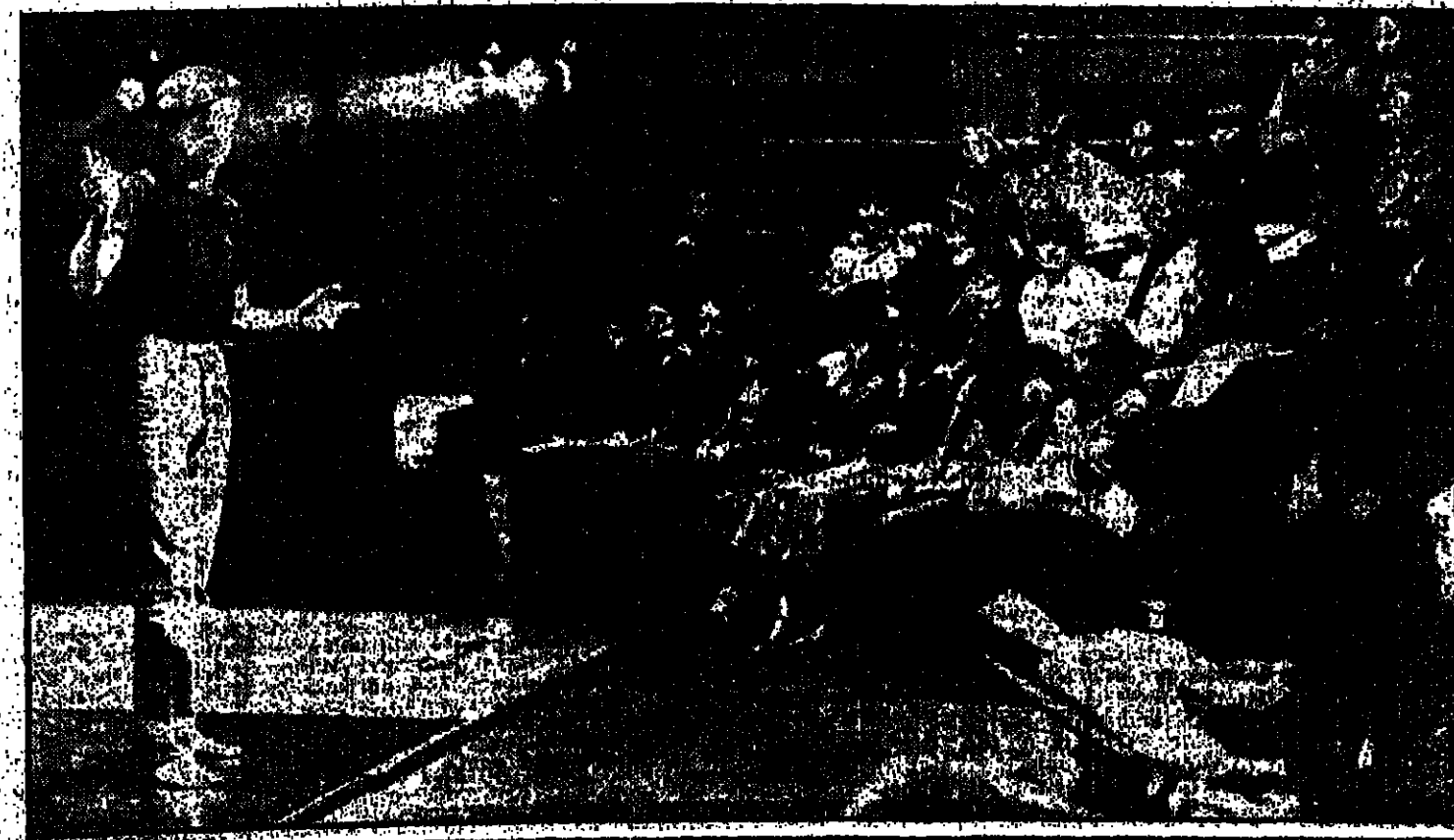
them to create their own movement phrase or sequence. You might give them a contrasting movement—flexible, free-flowing, light."

"The group then talks about the feelings evoked when they move, and the movements they have seen in the performance. So we're back to how the characters' movements affect their behaviour. How would you feel if you lived in a tower block flat with six other people? How would that space affect your movement and affect your feelings? And so we go right back to decision-making, which is what the piece is about really."

This marrying of a traditional art form with significant content is a driving force in Ludus's work. As Michael Merwitzer puts it: "We're constantly struggling to resolve this question of content and form. I want to explore what is unique about dance in relation to learning theory. For instance, dance is to do with shape, with space, with flow, with time. Perhaps if you want to teach an understanding of time, dance is the perfect medium for it. In the teeth of the power of big corporations and the state."

"Our next project is a programme for the mentally handicapped... Non-verbal communication is one of the most important factors in developing language. A lot of work one does with special school children is the same you do with other children. You just structure your programme differently to accommodate their special needs."

Ludus, like the best theatre-in-education companies, offer schools a powerful tool for learning. Their commitment to the medium of dance is a clue as to how what Laban called "the most primary of art forms" might be revitalized.





# review



## So marvellous... so hopelessly bad

David Wright on Alfred Lord Tennyson

Tennyson. The Unquiet Heart. By Robert Bernard Martin. Oxford University Press/Paber £12.95.

Tennyson's early life and background remained obscure behind the frosted glass of Victorian pudor and reticence till as recently as 1950, when the poet's grandson, the late Sir Charles Tennyson, threw open the family cupboard to air the skeletons and produce his splendid biography. And what skeletons they proved! Tennyson's background held all the quality of Gothic melodrama: a family feud, a wealthy, will-brandishing tyrannical grandfather, a threat of inherited epilepsy, and mental unbalance (four of Tennyson's brothers were in and out of the blo, while one became an opium-addict); a disinherited father who died of drink; a fortune lost in a Alcanberish get-rich-quick scheme.

Professor Martin's excellent new biography reveals all these episodes. At first all Tennyson seems to be the most unbalanced of poets. "My life is a tale of single sleep," he wrote in a love poem to Emily Sellwood whom he married 10 hesitant years later, a line which, as the Professor says, makes Emily seem "an alternative to a loveless bed." But what emerges is how remarkably sheltered Tennyson was for the whole of his long life. Despite his belief in his own poverty, and temporary loss of capital through investing in a steam-driven wood-cutting machine, he seldom had an income of less than £200 (20 times that in current values). After he became Laureate it often exceeded £10,000, which did not prevent him from hanging on to a £300 Civil List pension. In boyhood he was surrounded by an admiring, if eccentric, family; at Cambridge by an equally admiring undergraduate intellectual elite, the Apostles; led by Arthur Hallam, who nursed his poems through the press. After Hallam's death, there were friends like Spedding and Fitzgerald to lodge, feed, and even finance him (the latter gave Tennyson an income of

£300 for some years). When he married, first his wife and then his son Hallam stood between him and the winds of criticism and inconvenience, besides whom there were numerous minor-poet slaves like Palgrave and Allingham to place themselves at the great bard's beck and call.

Which helps to explain the major Tennysonian puzzle: how so marvellous a poet could at the same time be so hopelessly bad! Not like Wordsworth, with the badness of master-of-fact-bathos or pedestrian dullness, but with the badness of pure hysteria or sheer vulgarity. In much of Tennyson there is an unreality that fatally flaws putative masterpieces like *The Princess* or *Maud*. And too often he became—as in *Idylls of the King*—a poetic machine producing freetext for decoration.

Professor Martin points to "the curious unreality quality of Tennyson's description of daily life, almost as if he knew little of it." Tennyson seems to have shut himself off from all unpleasantness when invited to Ireland at the time of the great famine; he accepted on condition there was to be no mention of Irish distress. He was so shocked by Carnarvon could remark of his conversation: "It is the speech of a man who has lived in books, or in a very small world of his own." Despite a hot-triangular sensibility Tennyson had little sense of humour and less understanding of others' feelings; thus he often failed to distinguish sentiment from the sentimental, the moral from the maudlin, and was apt to play "on ready-made emotions, not valid ones," as in *Enoch Arden*, whose plot he got from a friend after asking for "a story to treat being full of poetry with nothing to put it in."

Tennyson's unique gift, apart from his exquisite ear, was a special ability to interpret "the interchange between one's own emotions and the external world." He exploited it to the full in the finest poem the Victorian age produced, *In Memoriam*, which is not entirely an elegy for Arthur Hallam, but also a great topographical poem, a valediction to his native Somerset and wolds of Lincolnshire.

## Artisan rhetoric

Douglas Johnson on the language of revolution in nineteenth-century France

Work and Revolution in France: The Language of Labour from the Old Régime to 1848. By William H. Sewall, Jr. Cambridge University Press £20.00.

We all know that when we talk of worker movements in the early nineteenth century, we are talking about artisans, not about factory workers. Even by the end of the century the artisans are among the leading participants in the labour movement as a whole. This has several implications. It means that the labour movement goes back more years than is usually realized. It means too that there is a great diversity in labour attitudes, since we can find the greatest variety among artisans: some of the most revolutionary, those who were in rebellion against the whole Industrial order, were among the least progressive, since they wanted to put the clock back and avoid the spread of machinery with its attendant unemployment. The artisans, too, or some of them, were distinguished by their verbal vigour and belief in ideology.

But how can we get closer to these artisans? How can we understand their actions in terms of ideas, assumptions, fears? How can we describe their organization and assess their influence? Any book which sets out to answer these questions is bound to be important and this, by Professor Sewall, of the University of Arizona, is certainly ambitious, utilizing as it does the methods of anthropology and examining the language and utterances of workers on a wide variety of subjects. It is an attempt to move on from conventional social and intellectual history writing.

The author takes, for example, the three newspapers, written and edited by workers, after the revolution of 1830. He shows how the texts are passionate in their demands on behalf of the workers, who are described as "the most numerous and the most useful class of society." But he shows too how the subsequent reasoning is complex, in as far as the writers seem to be appealing to the bourgeoisie, as if the bourgeoisie were naturally their leaders, while at the same time they are threatening the bourgeoisie, not only with violence but more precisely with ruin

should they not recognise the worker's essential importance. He interprets this code as being representative of the position in which the workers found themselves, being thrust into an unexpectedly powerful position during the revolutionary days, but having failed to exercise power or even influence once the revolution had been refuted.

But the most significant feature of the texts which are analysed is the extent to which they are adaptations of the old rhetoric of the French Revolution. There is more an echo of the abbé Sieyès and his *What is the Third Estate?* in the worker claims to be the sovereign people. The people, he declared, was nothing other than the working class. And the adaptation of this rhetoric to the 1830s meant that the workers, being they demonstrated that they were ennobled by the privileged class of the bourgeoisie, saw themselves as fighting for emancipation in the same way as the Third Estate had fought for their rights as citizens in the 1790s. Hence the 1830s witnessed a looking back to past language in order to define the existing world. In this way they emerged a new class consciousness.

The great doctrinal problem which the workers faced arose from the fact that the concept of freedom was to say freedom of association, the freedom to associate with others, and he examines how this notion of association was elaborated by various worker publications.

It is perhaps a pity that all the texts have been translated, since an examination of the language should surely be in the original. It is strange too that little attempt is made to study the relationship between vocabulary and society. But this is a book which further one's understanding of this period in French history, especially of the three revolutions which dominate it, and that is no mean achievement.



When James Cameron worked as a 16-a-week reporter on Glasgow's *Sunday Post* in the thirties, he became proficient in a style known to the trade as "Corny". This attempt to represent the native idiom of the Scottish working class is described in his autobiography as "an appalling six months' journey with apostrophes which bore as much likeness to the demotic speech of the Gorbals, say, as it did to Greek".

Cameron's employees at the time were D. C. Thompson and Co. who, with their rivals IPC, have since developed an updated London-based version of mass-market journalism. To ask the adolescent readers of *Jockie's Patch*, *Blue Jeans*, *Mates*, *Oh Boy* and *Secret Love*. The house-style to which all contributors, including letter-writers, conform is modelled on the mid-Atlantic vernacular of disc-jockeys. Billed syllables: "I instance a 'man' 'c'mon 'e 'eally 'know 'a 'mestey 'abbreviations 'a 'real 'bruv', 'a 'big 'bruv', and simplified spellings: "I 'ho", "oos", "I 'spos", "reasure: the young that this is 'no 'dunpoo: Dillville, but an 'escape from the tedious 'traps of the conventionally printed word.

Girls are assumed to be highly susceptible to alliteration, unable to resist a "bumper-bundle of pop-puzzles and lashings of love". "555 fun-and-tells filled pages" or "300 glam, glee-way-1. While tenderness and anxious heroines appear in photo-stories, there is no room for doubt of hesitation in the text which is strictly and uniformly

imperative: "Get to grips with your 'et 'brows", "Go wild with razzle-dazzle", "a little zap in our lives", "grab yourself a prize you".

Diminutives, on the analogy of "pissed" for "resents", coax readers to take advantage of "goodies" and "freebies", "get cheapies" and "goodies" in the case of perfume and deodorants, "smellies—Pick a Pong for You".

Editorial comment on the "super hot" of pop kid-ups, "your fave bunch of sex 'smashers" shown, naked, in the "fab pic", "invaders" resorts to garish comparisons. Food stands in for less facile appetites; a heavy-duty metaphor for the over-time; "Feeling hungry? Here's what hunky footie player/motorbike etc is doing over. He's a dlist, we reckon. The rumbler thing on two legs... the bestest 'babe around... the tastiest talent in town."

### Star info

The response to such a "meaty and mouth-watering" masculine allure is expected to be eager—"Gimme some more info, please at 'him"—but romance is rarely pursued beyond the initial spark. Most of the readers, lesty, on impact. In teen magazines, the reader is all. After elaborate preparations for the male trail, a girl's eye-catching beauty, her look is rewarded with a "glam" "wham I pam I wowee I swoon I... Gimme all you need to hypnotize your guy. (The fluster and he's all yours)".

Falling in love implies confusion, and a range of linguistic and leshings of love. But it is they did in the days of the "glam" "wham I pam I wowee I swoon I... Gimme all you need to hypnotize your guy. (The fluster and he's all yours)".

"Don't miss our guest guide to smooching. We'll make your kisses killers!"

Marion Glasston

## You just know it's there

Andrew Davies on a week's television

I have the vestiges of a puritan conscience about television, but reviewing is work, so I took full licence to wallow in it. *Star Trek* (BBC1) offered us the insight that "we are locked forever in the past", a proposition that the Deiderfeldt-adepter would be hard put to quarrel with. In this episode the crew had time-slipped several thousand years, at which time the Vulcans (Spock's race) had emotions, and Spock regressed dramatically. One of the strengths of this series is that it modulates concept and plot through a vocabulary equivalent to *Ladybird* Book 3, and this week it was almost a case of "Quick, Doc! Spot Spock's dick!" Not, alas, quite.

Doc could have quickly spotted Jim's pique, though, in Russell Harry (BBC2), a perfectly revolting half hour in which the plump host quivered and pranced around an enormous chip shop pretending to be having a whale of a time (the cod was off and the chips were cold, as one of his guests unsportingly remarked). But Harry was thoroughly upstaged for sheer camp-ing-about beastliness by Jimmy Savile, who seemed to be pretending he owned the place. "Well, at least you're getting good publicity tonight," said Harry, the smile wearing a little thin. At this Jimmy got a bit wispish: "We're not here for the publicity—we're doing a service for the people of England!" Quite. It looked like tears before bedtime, but Russell snatched things over. It's a strange thing, he said, "sitting in a fish and chip shop talking about God with Jimmy Savile." It's a bit more than a strange thing, but Russell's vision of Hell looks a bit silly, for a start.

All right, simmer down. There were three interesting single plays

in the week's viewing, two of them carried in my opinion by judicious casting, but all of them undertaken with a care, expertise and professionalism that makes one wonder why the stage gets so much critical attention compared to television. Life for Christine (Granada) has admittedly had its share. It's about a girl who has spent six years of her life in prisons and seems likely to spend the rest of her life there because nobody can think of anything else to do with her, and it somehow failed to involve me at all. I was much more moved by the blurb in the *TV Times* I found very curious. Most critics have taken the production team at their word, and blamed the show for being biased, taking Christine's point of view at every point, being so subjective that it alienated sympathy. I think that the trouble might have been the reverse: Christine was characteristically shown in medium or long shot deep focus: we were allowed to observe her from a distance, as one would at a zoo, or in Bedlam.

To take a typical example, there were repeated shots of Christine being stripped, held down, and forcibly injected. We were never made to identify and empathise with the victim here: our view was that of a little child, a corner or through a doorway. To paraphrase Lawrence, don't trust the author, trust the camera angle. Within the limits of the script and the treatment of it, Amanda York acted persuasively as Christine; but the play lost a lot of credibility with the casting of Nicholas ("Hazel") Ball in the role of a troubleshooting social worker who spent the play posing seductively about in a variety of nice denim outfits. Jade (BBC1 Play For Today) was



Eleanor Bron and Ronan Downey in "My Dear Palestrina"

a 12-year-old boy with different problems: the sort of parents who would name you Jude, for a start. Having done that to himself, but only father had disappeared promptly, reappearing now so that the play might take place. There were some delicately observed scenes, particularly in the writing and playing of the part of Jude's mother, taken by Gabrielle Lloyd; but it was very wrong for a television play. Lesley Bruce had a good character in Jude, working out his own philosophy against a world of dirty and devious adults: but she could not convey

this except through dialogue that seemed wildly improbable: "The beautiful things add the force of the beauty to the words—but only if the willing is good." It says a lot for Dorian Ford's performance that he managed to sound not only as if he understood this stuff, but as if he had made it up himself. No such problems for Ronan Downey, playing a boy of similar age in *My Dear Palestrina* by Bernard MacLaverty (BBC2 Playhouse). His dialogue was sparse, resonant, wholly realistic. All he had to do was to act illness, convalescence,

musical development from innocence to passionate involvement, emotional development ditto, turmoil, conflict, progress through puberty. He did it. Easy. Apart from the young actor's startling talent, the trick was to do it all on location shots: young Danny the embryo pianist was surrounded by characters who shot their mouths off, betrayed themselves in torrents of words, so that the boy could convey chunks of emotion through little splinters of speech. The story is briefly outlined: a 12-year-old boy has music lessons from a foreign piano teacher, wildly out of place in the phillistine Northern Ireland of the late 1950s. The community disapproves of her: the lessons stop. But it is too late for Danny: he has already learnt enough to see the world with new eyes.

Diarmuid Lawrence's direction was strong and sensitive. One scene in a cafe (beautifully designed by Diana Mennell) had so much going on that one longed for action replays: this was one in which the boy had scarcely a word, and yet he understood exactly what he was feeling and lived through it with him. But... a shame there has to be one, but for me the casting of Eleanor Bron as the volatile piano teacher was a mistake. "Go now... go quickly," she sobbed at the end. Ah, no, she has cried wolf on this sort of thing so many times no one is going to believe her any more.

Finally, one last quote from Jude, which has been haunting me since I heard it: "I don't weigh anything. You can't feel it. You just know it's there." Good isn't it? It could be anything from the love of God to a Playtex bra. Try saying it in yourself at difficult moments. It might help.

## Shock of the new

How is contemporary music reaching schoolchildren and students this season?

Hilary Finch reports

It is strange to think that in Mozart's day all music was new music. Now, two hundred years later, when there have never been so many opportunities to hear so much music from so much of man's history, it is new music that has to struggle to woo our time and inclination.

The question of whether contemporary music should be given specialist treatment in promotion and performance or whether the pill should always be sugared by the sweetness of more familiar repertoire is one for separate debate. One thing is certain, and that is that at any concert of contemporary music it is young people who are filling the seats, willing to risk disappointment either from untested experimental indulgence or from tough new music in an idiom not yet fully comprehended by our ears. What efforts are being made by contemporary music promoters to woo young audiences, and from the audiences of the future?

Probably the most well-known and prestigious umbrella organization, the Arts Council's Contemporary Music Network is now in the middle of a season of 12 subscription concerts in London's Round House which aim to give "an opportunity to perform some of the best groups in the contemporary music scene."

In many forms. Most of them are preceded by a workshop, lecture or demonstration organized by Goldsmith's College. Ten of these performances are the opening concerts of a series which visit 31 different venues throughout England and Wales and which are backed up by educational activities in schools and colleges. The European Council, the first two were the Pollack Connection and the Stockholm Connection; next year come the Messiaen, the Italian and the Boulez Connections. The idea is to

discussing with, if not preaching to, the converted. But the CMN is quite unashamedly low on missionary zeal: its activities, literature and advertising are studiously and thoroughly educational but almost defiantly unpropagandist and sadly unpersuasive.

The Society for the Promotion of New Music functions quite differently. The chief aim is to present and encourage professional performances of works by non-established composers; they tend to work more through sessions, rehearsals and discussions than through specially arranged public appearances, and they are funded mainly by a bequest; and, most important, describe themselves as "totally evangelical". Under their dedicated and energetic new administrator, Roderick Lakin, they bombard press and public with literature and attract large audiences to bizarre and unpredictable programmes. Many young student composers submit scores for performance: each one generally has four or five readings by a panel of critics, teachers, composers and conductors. Every event has a presenter, and at smaller events there is discussion afterwards.

No specific services are provided yet for schools and universities, though the chief aim is to create work-forces, to fulfil their basic function first which is to give composers performances. Students, however, get half-price membership, and free or reduced tickets. And in my view, the atmosphere of their "events" is more stimulating and less rarified even when the music itself is less accessible.

The New Macginitie Concerts is without doubt one of the most imaginative and successful ventures in bringing young people to contemporary music. Their five-concert subscription series in the Wigmore Hall which began last month and goes on until next March is phenomenally structured, under the general leadership of the European Council, the first two were the Pollack Connection and the Stockholm Connection; next year come the Messiaen, the Italian and the Boulez Connections. The idea is to

present works by leading composers in the context of their British pupils and followers.

This is inventive and educationally valuable enough in itself, but they also offer, in addition to their five-concert-for-£5 bargain, a Young Connection Ticket Scheme by which people are encouraged to donate subscriptions tickets for distribution to schoolchildren on the fringes of London. So far they have had 22 donors, but are finding it harder than they thought to operate the distribution, which does not say much for official music-educational bodies. They started through the music advisors in the outer London boroughs, so far Hillingdon has been the most enthusiastic. Last Friday 30 schoolchildren came, 15 of them 16-year-olds from Hillingdon. They work hard circulating schools and colleges and do succeed in attracting a younger than average audience.

MusICA is the name of the third series of concerts organized by Adrian Jack at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts. They share similar aims and purposes to the CMN and SPNM in providing platforms for both major contemporary composers and those who have yet to establish themselves. They publicize attractively, if not as widely and energetically as the SPNM, and offer back-up support and discussion. Their next programme on January 11 is a bipartite masterclass and documentary lecture recital in the afternoon and evening by Yvonne Mikhaylov on Ives's *Concord Sonata*. They do not go out of their way to cater for schoolchildren, but welcome parties for which they are willing to offer reduced rates in addition to the normal season ticket reductions.

Information: CMN: Annette Morrison, Arts Council of Great Britain, 105 Piccadilly, London W1 (01-629 9495, ext. 68). SPNM: Roderick Lakin, 1 Montague Street, London, WC1B 5BP (01-637 4049). Macginitie: 33 Chalmers Park, London N6 (01-340 6200). MusICA: Adrian Jack, The Mail, London SW1 (01-930 0493).

## When was the last time you saw 600 unknown masterpieces in one day?

The Cadbury's 1980 National Exhibition of Children's Art opens at the Museum & Art Gallery, Perth on 12th December.

All 600 exhibits were chosen by a committee under Sir Hugh Casson, President of the Royal Academy, out of more than 60,000 entries from schools throughout the country.

And they were chosen not just for the talent and virtuosity shown by some of the older children, but also for the sheer creativity of the younger children.

The exhibition opens at the Museum & Art Gallery, George Street, Perth, running from 12th December to 20th January. The Museum & Art Gallery is open from 10 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 5 pm, Monday to Saturday. Admission is free.

Who knows - this may be your last chance to see the first works of a future master.

Cadbury's National Exhibition of Children's Art 1980.





July 11



### Kevin Crossley-Holland

## Richard North

René Dubos is among the ecologists who have performed the miracle. They have countered the



because of man's activity. What is characteristically Greek (as it is characteristically British) in

## Glen Cavaliero

Yes, I remember Adlestrop

David Wright

as "The Other". To quote a sentence as an example: "His of an indefinite article in the phrase 'an end of almost generalization'."

## er Adlestrop

[illegible]

fructification of rural culture by the industrial revolution and its consequences (not which was the First World War)

## Marion Glastonbury

## The way in

### Roy Blatchford

in London, sections on "cliff  
hanger endings" and "mysterious  
messages", mnemonics to assist

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1033-1038.

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 277, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674,

ments for pupils, a simple format which other publishers will not be slow to follow.

## Mini helps

**Sam McCarter**

section, where they can be conveniently ignored.

## Children's literature

## Joy with tears in it

## Neil Philip

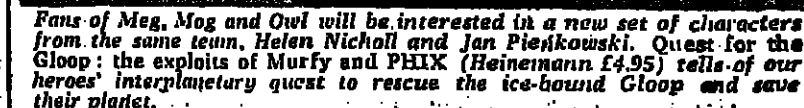
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putting it down and trying out new techniques for myself.



## Wordsmiths' workshop

**Kevin Crossley-Holland**

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# talkback

## First-year failures

Tony Evans

It's half-way through the Christmas term—in a typical, large, well-organized comprehensive school. Close liaison with primary school parents has encouraged nearly all the first years to wear school uniform—mauve pullover or blazer with black or grey trousers (boys) and green skirt, white socks or flesh coloured tights (girls). First year registration books are being kept clean and tidy; prompt, quiet movement between lessons has been achieved; the absentee monitoring system has quickly detected those few pupils missing lessons.

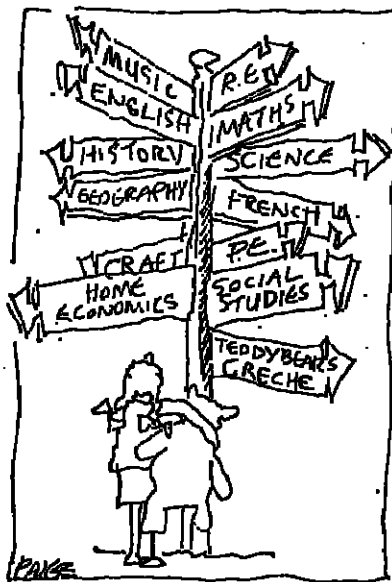
The academic programme, like the pastoral, is going well. After several weeks induction and assessment, the first year achievement profiles for each subject have been completed and filed, ready for updating at the end of each term. The Director of Studies will be able to allocate pupils to sets at the end of the mixed-ability first year.

Outside response to the first year programme has been good. Visiting HMIs have been pleased by the achievement of clearly stated objectives, the governors by quietness and uniform. Parents, too, were impressed by the well-organized meeting they attended after the first six weeks of term.

Sharon, a typical first year pupil, is not quite so impressed with her new school—not that she would say so if you asked her, because what she feels is more a sub-conscious sense of loss than active criticism.

One minor problem is her mauve pullover. It was not bought from Rimp and Warrout Ltd, the official school supplier, and is not quite so mauve as it should be. Really she would like a smart blazer like her friend Emma; on the other hand she feels better off than Wayne, who is lost inside his mother's hand-drawn black trousers.

Of course, in the primary school they all wore jeans and any kind of top—but that was several months ago. A bigger problem for Sharon is that she does not have a potted teacher or classroom anywhere. In her last year at primary school, Sharon enjoyed being taught by one



teacher for 90 per cent of the time. This allowed Sharon, a quiet girl of average ability, to build up a confident relationship.

They used to spend the mornings on sums and writing and the afternoons on reading and science or humanities-related projects, although Sharon might do the same thing all day if she was involved and keen to finish. Sharon liked to see her work pinned up on the wall and enjoyed the layout of her large Victorian classroom, with its reading area, science corner, cooker, fish-tank, and hamsters.

Now, instead of her one teacher, there are teachers for maths, science, English, history, geography, French, craft, physical education, home economics, social studies, religious education and music. She also has a form teacher who sees her for fifteen minutes each day.

Her new teachers are conscientious, but naturally know little about Sharon as a person, because they see so little of her; even the English teacher, despite calling her Emma, Sharon has never been very good at putting her hand up and speaking formally to a whole class, so she does not say much in her new school. Her previous teacher had time to chat to Sharon, and new teachers have 40 minute sessions to give out work, settle the class, start the lesson, go over the

work and collect it in—this does not leave much time for chatting to individuals. Sharon missed the lengthy projects and 3D work she used to do, and finds a diet of pen, paper and exercises boring.

Sharon also misses her old classroom. Her formroom is by non-teaching staff, before any more random tasks are pushed in their direction. I work with three part-time colleagues in a school looking after 1,000 pupils and 60-odd staff and all their dependants. Now what kind of ratio is that?

They are a wonderful group, kind, humorous, helpful and tolerant, but the organizational whirl in which the school operates leaves us office staff at the end of the day limp and exhausted, and often with very little achieved in the way of real work. That often has to be done at home, in the quiet of the evening. And we can't claim overtime.

I view with horror the suggestion that further duties could be transferred to us. First, order needs to be born from the existing chaos. Let's have some clear definitions of what non-teaching staff are supposed to do, and let's have some reasonable manning levels with a realistic salary structure.

We need for too many masters, and as long as we produce the work at the end of the day, not one of them is particularly bothered about how it gets done. For my part, I have four masters, and my day is spent juggling with their various requirements.

For the Head I perform my standard secretarial duties, dealing

## Too many masters

Could some serious consideration be given to the role played by non-teaching staff, before any more random tasks are pushed in their direction? I work with three part-time colleagues in a school looking after 1,000 pupils and 60-odd staff and all their dependants. Now what kind of ratio is that?

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scrutiny (and comments) of the and the judgment of teachers. I await the P.H.D. thesis. School performance and family background indexed by teachers' stereotypes of children's underwear."

Our local junior school (on the trendy side of the tracks) debates girls from local rounders, somehow, is acceptable. No doubt some proto-emulation to galvanize her media persona by whipping their television crew in the school for a quick jockey seat on that one.

In secondary schools, the physical education staff still sit in a bar of cigarettes in a corner of the staff room. Trackuits are purple ski style (not black sharp drill-sergeant). They have E.E.S. in Recreational Management, but they still tend towards the Daily Mail. Acme Thunderers hang round the plating tins, not to the mouth and through, no doubt, a combination of paralytic shock control and the corrosive action of nicotine.

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## overseas

# The Caribbean



As 11 pupils are still sorted into sheep and goats.

## Barbados: moving carefully to keep the best it has

Diane Spencer reports on progress towards a new system of secondary schooling.

Barbados has been moving slowly towards a comprehensive system, the rest either have to stay in the 41 all-age schools which are being phased out, or, if they are backward, they go to remedial annexes or special schools.

The brightest, more academic pupils go to the nine grammar schools, some of which date back to the late eighteenth century, now called older secondaries; the rest to the 12 newer secondaries which evolved from secondary moderns introduced in 1952.

The older schools are gradually becoming co-educational, and less academically oriented, while the newer schools are broadening their curricula and increasing the numbers taking exams, in response to the changing nature of the island's economy.

The Government and the Education Department have long been exercising their minds on how to accelerate progress towards a more equitable secondary system. Mr Louis Tull, the Education Minister in Mr Tom Adams' Barbadian Labour Party administration, has been meeting parents, unions and teachers during the past months to discuss the issue.

Earlier this year a new Education Act was expected to be passed by now which would have brought to an end the common entrance exam and introduced a comprehensive education system; but the subject is clearly so delicate that the politicians are handling it with extreme caution, and legislation is still on the far horizon.

Meanwhile, a massive building programme to replace secondary schools and build new primary schools with a loan from the World Bank is well under way. But, unlike Britain, the population of 260,000 is increasing, so demand still outstrips supply.

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## overseas Caribbean exams begin to elbow out GCE system

by Clive Cookson

Dr Eric Williams, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, first suggested that the English-speaking Caribbean should establish its own system of examinations, to replace the British General Certificate of Education (GCE) in the region, in his influential book *Education in the British West Indies* 30 years ago.

The idea came to fruition slowly. In 1954, the Commonwealth Caribbean countries reached an accord to set up a Caribbean Examinations Council. This 14 governments formally established the council, known familiarly as the CXC, in 1972, and last year it set its first exams in five subjects (English, history, geography, mathematics and integrated science).

Now that the council is in business, its operations are expanding steadily. This year six new subjects were added to the original five, and two more will be introduced in 1981. By 1985 the CXC plans to offer at least 25 subjects.

The number of subject entries was 58,000 in 1979, 101,000 this year, and 150,000 are expected (from 55,000 candidates) in 1981.

The CXC Secondary Education Certificate is designed for fifth-form students (who have completed five years), and the papers are offered at two levels—"basic proficiency" and "general proficiency".

They are based on the same syllabus but whereas the "general proficiency" is exactly equivalent to GCE O level, the "basic proficiency" exams call for less extensive knowledge and understanding.

The basic papers are aimed at two distinct groups of candidates: prospective college students who are specialising in other subjects, and less able pupils who would otherwise leave school without a formal qualification. "The council hopes that teachers and parents will not treat the basic proficiency exam as a mere reserve exclusively for the dim-witted, that is, those unable to cope with a GCE paper," said Dr F. R. Augier, provost-chancellor of the University of the West Indies. "The council hopes that a large number of candidates will be entered for both examinations in different subjects and the candidates who have taken all of their exams in one or other, general or basic, will be relatively small."

The CXC does not yet have an advanced examination nor one for those who have completed sixth-form, but the council's registrar, Mr Wilfred Beckles, says a feasibility study is now under way to determine whether it should develop an examination equivalent to GCE A level.

The fledgling council—the first international testing agency to emerge since the East African Examinations Council 10 years ago—has received help from several established examining bodies.

The most important technical assistance came from the Educational Testing Service (ETS) of the United States, and from the University of Cambridge local examination syndicate, which is the GCE board most active in the West Indies. (The University of London Examinations Council is the region's second most active external board, according to CXC officials, and it has lent a hand too.)

The main role of the Cambridge

board has been to train CXC examiners to mark essays and short answers. About 130 West Indian teachers were prepared for the job by marking Cambridge O level scripts from Caribbean candidates under the supervision of Cambridge examiners.

ETS had a contract to help CXC prepare American-style multiple choice papers and set up an electronic system to mark them. The first year's exams were processed and scored by ETS, but this year CXC did the job itself, using an IBM computer at the Barbados government data processing unit.

As a result, the new CXC exams have an interesting Anglo-American flavour. The multiple choice papers are reminiscent of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and other "objective tests". But the essay and written answer papers read like a traditional British exam.

Mr Beckles said the objectives of CXC were best summarized in an address to the Council's inaugural meeting by Mr William Demas, former secretary-general of the Caribbean Community and Common Market. "The ill effects on West Indian education of a system of secondary school examinations run by alien examining bodies and based on syllabuses developed overseas and presided over by alien examiners have for a long time been glaringly obvious. Some of the features of a system imposed on the region from outside from colonial times cannot be tolerated in this age of West Indian cultural and intellectual independence. It is only natural that the region should be taking steps to institute an independent examinations system."

Therefore the CXC syllabus uses as much regional material as possible. The history papers are based entirely on Caribbean history, and even in mathematics the questions focus on Caribbean life. For example, a "supermarket" sells a two-pound box of Guyana rice for \$1 and a one-kilogram box of Trinidad rice for \$1.10. One kilogram is equal to 2.2 pounds. Which is cheaper?

Although strictly speaking we are an examining body, not a curriculum development agency, we are inevitably acting as a catalyst for curriculum development in the region," said Mr Beckles.

To prepare schools to use the new CXC syllabuses, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is funding a three-year curriculum development project starting this year.

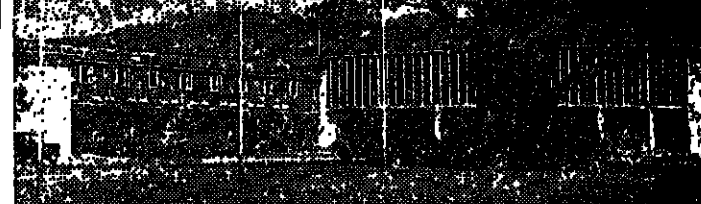
It will enable the council to train teachers and help them produce appropriate teaching materials. West Indian teachers, who have traditionally relied on textbooks imported from Britain and North America, had complained about the lack of books and other material relevant to the new system.

The two regional universities, the University of the West Indies and the University of Guyana, have six representatives on the 40-member CXC council and they are enthusiastically supporting its work. But institutions agreed before the first year's exams that they would recognize Grades I and II in general proficiency as equivalent to GCE O level passes.

CXC candidates receive a grade from I to V on each subject. In addition to the overall grade, the certificate gives a "profile report". For example, on a sample certificate a candidate who obtained grade III in integrated science was given the following profile: knowledge (C), ability (C), practical (D), scientific (D).

The council is seeking recognition abroad, and in January 1981, Mr Beckles said the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) had agreed that CXC grades I and II were equivalent to its O level passes. However, the preliminary responses of the London and Scottish boards was that only grade I was equivalent to O level.

The reaction in the United States and Canada has been favourable, the CXC registrar said, "and overall the international response has been good enough to say that there is recognition of our certificates overseas."



Tranquil university scene in Jamaica, but threats hover.

## Regional university faces future of uncertainty

by Tony Payne

The University of the West Indies (UWI) is a highly international institution of higher education.

It serves the whole of the Commonwealth Caribbean region and is responsible to the governments of 14 separate territories: Antigua, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts, St Lucia, St Vincent and Trinidad and Tobago.

Now in its 31st year, UWI was first established in October, 1948. It was located in Jamaica, on a beautiful site at Mona, about six miles from the centre of Kingston, the island's capital and was then called the University College of the West Indies. It awarded University degrees until, in 1962, it was granted university status by royal charter. In that first year just 33 students were enrolled, all in one faculty, that of medicine.

Today there are more than 8,000 full-time students at the university, which has eight faculties. Two more campuses have been established. The first to be added was in Trinidad, when in 1960 the old Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, situated at St Augustine, a small township just outside Port of Spain, was absorbed into the university as the School of Agriculture.

A few years later the teaching of arts and sciences was extended to the St Augustine campus and made the cornerstone of another campus established at Cave Hill in Bridgetown, Barbados, specifically to serve that territory and the small islands of the Leewards and Windwards.

The university also maintains a physical presence in all the participating territories through its extramural department. In this sense UWI has certainly thrived. It has considerably expanded the scope of its teaching and research activities, the general infrastructure of a university has been well provided for, and it has been able to acquire for itself a respectable academic reputation in the world of higher education.

But this has not been achieved without difficulty. From the outset UWI has had to operate in a highly political climate and on a number of occasions has faced the prospect that it would not survive as a regional university.

Its political problems largely derive from the fact that it was never intended to have to cope with so many different governments.

The university was conceived at a time when it was naturally assumed that the various scattered British West Indian territories would eventually be integrated into a single political unit. Indeed, it was seen as an integral part of the process of nation-building in the West Indies.

The Irvine Committee, which made the initial proposal for the establishment of a regional university in the West Indies, originally stressed that its membership was for one university by name at all. Part of the case for this was obviously the financial savings involved in centralising the provision of university education in the region.

It was also derived from the hope that the establishment of a single university would contribute to the emergence of a genuinely West Indian outlook in the area.

Federation, which was the prize of this process of nation-building, collapsed ignominiously in 1962 after just four years of existence.

Since then the territories of the region have pursued their own goals on a separate basis, but the dual units. Of the 14 territories, currently support UWI, eight are now fully independent, in the associated states seeking independence and four are still associated with elected governments.

This development has caused quite unforeseen problems for the university. Every aspect of its functioning is now ultimately dependent on the changing character of political relationships that exist between these states. In this lies the source of the current problems facing the university.

The origins of the current problems go back to 1975 when the Jamaican Government, which had only recently declared its commitment to socialism, put forward proposals for the "democratization" of the university. This prompted a reaction of the role of UWI by the Trinidad Government.

Trinidad's Prime Minister, Mr Williams, has long been a "defender" of the university, particularly concerned to ensure maintenance of proper standards, but it is said that he was alarmed by the proposal that the Jamaican Government put forward for UWI to be turned into a "people's university".

In October 1977 the Trinidadian Government produced a White Paper reviewing its relationship with UWI. It observed that it had become increasingly obvious in recent years that the university was unable to respond to the specific technical and industrial needs of the island.

It proposed that a National Council of Higher Education be set up in Trinidad to all this and to act as a coordinating body for the island's higher education. It also argued that a major factor to the university's lack of response was its complex and cumbersome structure.

White Paper accordingly proposed that the central University Council should become a "national advisory body" on finance and development, and that the island's universities should retain their local autonomy.

Unless such a new structure evolved it suggested that a complete breakaway of the island's unit was inevitable.

Thus the threat of disintegration over the university. The Jamaican Government is currently taking the building at St Augustine as a medical school, which is to be a faculty of the campus and fully integrated as a separate and fully functioning university. Many felt that this was a "sell-out" to the island's political interests.

The election of a new prime minister last month may bring a new economic relief to the island, but it has also brought to power Edward Seaga, who has a long expressed interest in a separate Jamaican university. From every angle, it seems the university faces a most uncertain future.

Dr A. J. Payne is a lecturer in Education at the University of Manchester, and author of *The Caribbean: Community and Development*. Manchester University Press, 1980.

Vocational schemes struggle to have an impact

## Fighting the colonial past

Mike Phillips

Further education in the Caribbean is a relatively new area of concern, and needs to be seen in the context of a colonial system of education which has been struggling to reform itself over the past 10 years.

In most of the Caribbean countries, in fact, "further education" is used as a synonym for technical education or teacher training. In some of the larger islands it has recently been taken as a sort of panacea for solving unemployment and the various difficulties which stem from having large numbers of young people hanging around with nothing to do. For instance, when the new permanent took over in Grenada in 1974, one of its priorities was to find a way of occupying the unemployed young people who spent their days hanging about the beaches soliciting handouts from tourists. This task was all the more difficult because there was only one institution on the island—the Grenada Vocational and Technical College, which had been established in 1962 and had a post-vocational training.

Grenada was probably typical of the smaller islands in the eastern Caribbean, but in all the Caribbean countries, with the exception of Trinidad, the problem of further education has not been simply a matter of will or resources. Traditionally, unemployment has been consistently as high as 30 per cent in some of the larger countries, and in the smaller islands large parts of the population still depend on subsistence farming. Industry was only able to absorb a limited proportion of each generation, while the others simply emigrated to the nearest industrial centre.

As a specific response to "further education" for a large range of technical skills, the plan takes little account of any provision based on the needs of young unemployed people and school drop-outs. These may or may not find their way to vocational schemes which offer vocational training, but the experience of such schemes seems to indicate that there are large numbers of young people who cannot be catered for by the Government's system of technical education.

In the case of the setting up of 16 vocational schools, the picture remains one in which the "classical" system is dominant with an inadequate vocational structure grafted on.

A demonstration of the inadequacy is the success of one voluntary scheme, Servol, which has set up six "Life Centres" in Trinidad and Tobago. These are vocational courses with a number of services, like nursery schools, attached to them. In March 1979 Servol let it be known by word of mouth that vacancies existed for 32 new apprentices. On the day in question, 142 boys and girls lined up to apply.

Jamaica, on the other hand, has established in the last decade a complex and multi-layered pattern, which has continued to be stimulated by political needs and by rising expectations, brought about by organization and increased literacy.

The formal spine of further education is the College of Arts and Technology (CAST), which had 3,251 enrolments last year. CAST is paralleled by the Jamaica School of Agriculture with 542 enrolments.

Then there are a number of industrial training schemes which offer apprenticeships, 1,500 in the motor trade, 104 in the garment industry. There are also four community colleges which offer a sixth form education or its equivalent, and which catered for 200 in 1979. Around these formal provisions are a number of informal schemes.

The Social Development Commission runs a Youth Corps which is aimed at graduates of high schools and technical high schools, together with youth club members and school drop-outs. There are five non-residential centres which offer remedial education and skills training.

A system of placements locates the students in the social services or the agricultural industries. One statistic illustrates the problem, however: 5,000 people went through the SDC's scheme last year, but only 58 per cent found employment afterwards.

Teachers' pleas reprove Aunt Sally

going abroad to university, or in more recent years to the University of the West Indies.

Over the last 10 years, however, pressure has begun to mount in all these countries for a more flexible system which would offer educational opportunities to those young people not catered for by the traditional patterns. In different places it took different forms.

In Jamaica, for instance, the pressure was frankly to do with the existence and proliferation of the slum culture which developed as people streamed off the land into Kingston.

In Trinidad the need of the oil industries for skilled manpower led to a re-examination of educational priorities and the Government's draft plan for education up to 1983 summed up the position: "The education system of Trinidad and Tobago has traditionally been dominated by primary schooling for the vast majority on the one hand and classically oriented secondary education for the very few on the other hand. In the hope of widening intellectual horizons and as a matter of national economic survival, this plan on technical education aims to bring Trinidad and Tobago into the stream of the present development in science and technology, in order that industry will be supplied with persons possessing developed intellectual resources, certain fundamental skills, and a flexibility for further education."

As a specific response to "further education" for a large range of technical skills, the plan takes little account of any provision based on the needs of young unemployed people and school drop-outs. These may or may not find their way to vocational schemes which offer vocational training, but the experience of such schemes seems to indicate that there are large numbers of young people who cannot be catered for by the Government's system of technical education.

In the case of the setting up of 16 vocational schools, the picture remains one in which the "classical" system is dominant with an inadequate vocational structure grafted on.

A demonstration of the inadequacy is the success of one voluntary scheme, Servol, which has set up six "Life Centres" in Trinidad and Tobago. These are vocational courses with a number of services, like nursery schools, attached to them. In March 1979 Servol let it be known by word of mouth that vacancies existed for 32 new apprentices. On the day in question, 142 boys and girls lined up to apply.

Jamaica, on the other hand, has established in the last decade a complex and multi-layered pattern, which has continued to be stimulated by political needs and by rising expectations, brought about by organization and increased literacy.

The formal spine of further education is the College of Arts and Technology (CAST), which had 3,251 enrolments last year. CAST is paralleled by the Jamaica School of Agriculture with 542 enrolments.

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to give the course a more Caribbean flavour. But there was strong resistance from teachers. "I was in the West Indies, visiting, and discussing with teachers a Caribbean version of my five-volume English language textbook. The original language was British, and the Caribbean edition would be an even greater appeal."

There was my first surprise. The teachers' I spoke to spoke to keep it much of the same. "Material as possible," they said, "there were things that their found strange or difficult. I was on an Aunt Sally, or a one-up-one-down, but the teachers wanted their pupils to be about such things. They of their pupils had relatives who were watching American films, programmes on television, they would well go to the cinema, or have careers overseas. They should have an international outlook and not be bound by narrow parochial education."

They made some concessions. I had agreed that 20 pages of material about snow and ice, and a bit excessive for Caribbean pupils, should be dropped. But there should be a West Indian chapter. I agreed that much adult writing is about childhood (the work of Michael Anthony, George Lamming, C. L. R. James, Geoffrey Drayton and Ian McDonald, for instance) though here the comparative difficulty of the material for young readers had to be taken into account.

Fortunately, the wealth of vivid West Indian prose and verse available made selection in the end fairly easy.

A second surprise was the attitude towards dialect. The official stance is that standard English and dialect are of equal status and value, and that some dialect writing should be included in textbooks. It is acceptable as anyone else's "dialect" and in any case

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Rhodri Jones is head of a North London school and author of the New English series, published by Methuen Educational Books Ltd.

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